



*Draft Environmental Assessment
for the*

**Walter E. Hoffman
United States Courthouse
Proposed Courthouse Annex
Norfolk, Virginia**



Responsible Agency:

**General Services Administration
Region 3**

April 2006



Appendix B
Summary of Comments

Summary of Comments

Name	Affiliation	Date & Form of Comment	Comments
Margaret Swartley	Interested Citizen	November 15, 2005 e-mail	Opposes the Southern Annex Alternative. Supports the Northern Annex Alternative and going to the East. Suggests moving the Norfolk Scope Arena and building a new sports complex near Harbor Park.
Aimee Davenport	Interested Citizen	November 15, 2005 e-mail	Opposes the Southern Annex Alternative.
Erica Tolbert	Interested Citizen	November 15, 2005 e-mail	Opposes the Southern Annex Alternative. Supports the Western Annex Alternative.
Nancy Parker	Interested Citizen	November 15, 2005 e-mail	Opposes the Southern Annex Alternative.
Susan Pierce	Interested Citizen	November 15, 2005 e-mail	Opposes the Southern Annex Alternative. Supports starting over completely or adding floors the the existing courthouse.
William Speidel	Interested Citizen	November 15, 2005 e-mail	Supports the Southern Annex Alternative.
Frances M. Bolch	Interested Citizen	November 16, 2005 e-mail	Believes GSA has made up their mind. Believes GSA should give more consideration for what is really the right thing to do.
John Michael Dukes	Interested Citizen	November 20, 2005 e-mail	Does not support Southern Annex Alternative or the Western Annex Alternative. Supports the Northern Annex Site.
Robert Mandle	Interested Citizen	January 1, 2006 e-mail	Believes the argument for not building in the 500-year floodplain is flawed. Believes the security issues associated with the Northern Annex Alternative could be avoided through clever design. Supports the Northern Annex Alternative.
Betty from Virginia Beach	Interested Citizen	January 12, 2006 e-mail	Does not support the Northern Annex Alternative. Would like to see a new complex built in Virginia

Name	Affiliation	Date & Form of Comment	Comments
			Beach or Chesapeake.
Judith Gilbert	Interested Citizen	January 12, 2006 e-mail	Supports starting over and building a new facility at the existing site.
Harold Hagans	Interested Citizen	January 12, 2006 e-mail	Supports selling the old building and use the proceeds to build a new courthouse building on a new site.
Kimble A. David	Interested Citizen	January 11, 2006 & January 12, 2006 e-mail	Believes the Greyhound Bus Station and the Norfolk Scope Arena /Chrysler Hall complex could be eligible for the National Register. Also believes archaeological impacts are possible. The public housing project east-northeast of the property could also be considered eligible for the National Register.
Mikeas	Interested Citizen	January 13, 2006 e-mail	Supports the Northern Annex Alternative.
J. Britt	Interested Citizen	January 14, 2006 e-mail	Would like to know the reasoning a tower alternative was not considered.
Peter Decker	Interested Citizen	January 16, 2006 e-mail	Supports going straight up on the existing courthouse. If additional property is needed expansion could go north, east, or south.
Heidi Gillis	Interested Citizen	January 17, 2006 e-mail	Opposed to Southern Annex Alternative and Eastern Annex Alternative. Believes that closing portions of Monticello would severely impact traffic. Supports the Northern Annex Alternative.
Anonymous	Concerned Citizen and Taxpayer	January 20, 2006 Letter	Opposed to Southern Annex Alternative. Believes that a cross walk over Brambleton would be a good option. Believes that there is sufficient space in the existing courthouse.
Norm Weakland	Owner of Condominium	January 24, 2006 e-mail	Would like information on the timeline of the project. Specifically

Name	Affiliation	Date & Form of Comment	Comments
	at the Lofts at 500 Granby		when ownership would be taken if the Southern Annex Site is selected. Would also like to know when the South option was first discussed.
Steven Martin	Interested Citizen	January 28, 2006 e-mail	Opposed to relocating the courthouse. Opposed to the Southern Annex Alternative. Supports Eastern and Northern Annex Alternatives.
Norm Weakland	Owner of Condominium at the Lofts at 500 Granby	January 31, 2006 e-mail	Would like to see a Tower Alternative analyzed. Believes work arounds should have been discussed or examined for the Northern Annex Alternative. Believes the East site would not incur an increase traffic burden in the area and that the lack of a traffic analysis gives the impression that this option is not amenable to the clients. Believes the Southern Annex Alternative would bypass the Historic Preservation Act and would utilize eminent domain to remove people from their homes. Believes the Western Annex Alternative is the best option. In order of precedence the sites should be West, East, North, and then South.
Jeffrey Cyr	Owner of Condominium at the Lofts at 500 Granby	January 31, 2006 e-mail	Opposed to the Southern Annex Alternative. Supports the Western Annex Alternative.
Blount Hunter	Interested Citizen	February 1, 2006 Letter	Supports further consideration of the Northern Annex Alternative and a vertical expansion atop the existing building. Opposes the Southern Annex Alternative.
Susanne Williams	Norfolk Preservation Alliance	January 10, 2006 Public Scoping Meeting	Opposed to Southern Annex Alternative. Supports the Northern Annex Alternative. Would like to see more hybrid solutions examined (i.e. filling in the courtyard and

Name	Affiliation	Date & Form of Comment	Comments
			developing smaller portions of the other sites).
Ben Bines	Interested Citizen	January 10, 2006 Public Scoping Meeting	Opposes the Southern Annex Alternative.
Baxter Simmons, SR	Interested Citizen	January 10, 2006 Public Scoping Meeting	Opposes the Southern Annex Alternative. Displacing Baxter's Sport's Lounge will result in a loss of \$6 to \$7 million in tax revenue for the city. Would like to see a cost analysis. Believes the Northern Annex Alternative should be implemented and not the Southern Annex Alternative. Supports the Eastern Annex Alternative.
Blount Hunter	Interested Citizen	January 10, 2006 Public Scoping Meeting	Believes that developing the courthouse annex on land that is not privately owned would be beneficial to the city. Would like to see a tower alternative considered. Believes all options are worthy of equal attention. The Southern Annex Alternative should not be the preferred alternative at this time.
Chris Malendoski	Listing Broker for the Lofts at 500 Granby	January 10, 2006 Public Scoping Meeting	Opposes the Southern Annex Alternative. Would like to see a vertical and lateral addition considered. Also supports the Eastern Annex Alternative.
Karen Perreault	Interested Citizen	January 10, 2006 Public Scoping Meeting	Opposes the Southern Annex Alternative. Would like to see a vertical alternative considered. Also, supports consideration of an Eastern Alternative.
Baxter Simmon's Jr.	Owner of Baxter's Sports Lounge	January 10, 2006 Public Scoping Meeting	Opposes the Southern Annex Alternative. Supports the Northern Annex Alternative. Would like to see a cost analysis for all the alternatives.
Henry Shriver	Interested	January 10, 2006	Feels the courthouse should remain

Name	Affiliation	Date & Form of Comment	Comments
	Citizen	Public Scoping Meeting	in the city. Would like to see a vertical option analyzed. Would like the cost of the different options to be carefully considered.
Greg Bolch	Resident of the Lofts at 500 Granby	January 10, 2006 Public Scoping Meeting	Appreciates the Eastern Annex Alternative being considered and would like to see a vertical option analyzed. Believes there is a precedent for having courthouses divided when they have to be.
Rob Mandle	Interested Citizen	January 10, 2006 Public Scoping Meeting	Supports the Northern Annex Alternative. States that the Executive Order does not refer to the 500-year floodplain. Interested in the Eastern Annex Alternative.
Alice Allen-Grimes	Norfolk Resident and member of the Norfolk Preservation Alliance	January 10, 2006 Public Scoping Meeting	Supports the expansion of the courthouse. Would like to see a vertical/interior alternative considered. Would like to see all options evaluated. Would like a Citizen Advisory Committee to be formed as the study continues.

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PUBLIC HEARING
WALTER E. HOFFMAN U.S. COURTHOUSE
PROPOSED COURTHOUSE ANNEX

Norfolk, Virginia
January 10, 2006

Appearances:

Joan Glynn, Moderator
John Morrell
Rob Hewell
Betsy Paret

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1 MS. GLYNN: Again, good evening and
2 welcome to tonight's meeting on the Walter E. Hoffman
3 Courthouse Proposed Annex. My name is Joan Glynn and
4 I am a consultant with the General Services
5 Administration who is administering this project.
6 Some of you may have attended the last public meeting
7 that was held on this project on November 14th, 2005,
8 and much of the information that we're going to be
9 presenting tonight is the same as information that was
10 presented that night; however, GSA is holding
11 tonight's meeting to meet its obligations under the
12 National Environmental Policy Act.

13 The following presentation will explain
14 the courthouse annex project, the purpose and need for
15 the project, the sites under consideration and the
16 Environmental Assessment process that GSA will be
17 undertaking. The presentation will also address GSA's
18 compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act
19 as a Federal steward of important historic resources.

20 Following the presentation we will be
21 accepting your comments and your questions on the
22 environmental studies and answering any questions you
23 may have. If you have not already done so, we have at
24 the sign-in table a sheet to sign up to speak. If at
25 any time during the meeting you decide you would like

1 to speak, please feel free to go back and add your
2 name to the list. When we do have the questions and
3 answers at the end, we are asking everyone to limit
4 their questions to three minutes so we may give
5 everyone an opportunity to speak.

6 You also notice that we have a
7 stenographer here tonight. That is so we have an
8 accurate, complete record of the meeting and of
9 everyone's comments so they can be taken into
10 consideration as we prepare the Environmental
11 Assessment.

12 The existing Walter E. Hoffman United
13 States Courthouse is located at 600 Granby Street, was
14 constructed between 1932 and 1934 to house the U.S.
15 Post Office, the U.S. District Court and all Federal
16 agencies in Norfolk. In 1984 the building was listed
17 on the National Register of Historic Places. It
18 contains a gross building area of 203,443 square feet
19 and 126,196 usable square feet of floor space. The
20 building currently houses the U.S. District Court, the
21 U.S. Bankruptcy Court and the court-related offices.

22 The purpose of this proposed action is to
23 create a unified courthouse facility that will
24 accommodate the 30-year space requirements of the
25 court and court-related agencies. This is to maintain

1 the court presence in Norfolk, also to adapt and reuse
2 the existing Hoffman Courthouse building and to create
3 a unified court complex that optimizes security,
4 circulation and operations.

5 The court's security requirements have
6 changed dramatically since this project was first
7 envisioned and first begun. The existing Hoffman
8 Courthouse does not provide adequate security for the
9 courts. The courthouse represents an adaptation of a
10 building which was designed in a different era to the
11 security concerns of today's courthouses. At the time
12 of its completion in 1934 there was little provision
13 for the separation of circulation between public,
14 private and secure uses other than in the area of the
15 building originally designed for use by the U.S. Post
16 Office. The original mixed use of the building with
17 the post office on the ground floor and the courts and
18 the Federal agencies above was the defining criterion
19 for the circulation system.

20 The most pressing need today is for a
21 secure corridor system for prisoner movements. At
22 present the public, jurors, trial participants and
23 judicial officers share the same elevators and
24 hallways. The U.S. Marshals Service must unload
25 prisoners in the north parking lot which is used for

1 judges parking and walking directly into the Marshals
2 Service space.

3 Several alternatives have been analyzed
4 and dismissed from further study for this project.
5 The first of these, the adaptive reuse of existing
6 commercial space was proven costly and inefficient.
7 When evaluating existing structures in Norfolk that
8 would be suitable for use, several important physical
9 issues would have to be kept in mind. The
10 architecture of the Federal Courthouse must promote
11 respect for the tradition and purpose of the American
12 judicial process.

13 More importantly, the specific design and
14 operating requirements for court and related agency
15 functions with particular regard to security are not
16 easily met through leased space. To accommodate
17 movement within a courthouse, three separate
18 circulation zones must be provided, public, restricted
19 and secure. Public circulation requires a single
20 controlled entry but allows free movement within the
21 building. Restricted circulation requires a single
22 controlled interior entry and is limited to judges,
23 court personnel and official visitors. Secure
24 circulation is intended for prisoners and is
25 controlled by the U.S. Marshals Service. Therefore,

1 this alternative was dismissed because of its cost,
2 inefficiency and related security issues.

3 The direct Federal construction was
4 evaluated by GSA and we evaluated the construction of
5 a new standalone courthouse to replace the existing
6 Hoffman Courthouse. The existing courthouse is
7 considered to be in good condition both structurally
8 and mechanically. In the past 25 years substantial
9 improvements have been made to the building in the
10 form of major renovations and modifications.

11 An analysis by GSA indicates that the
12 cost of constructing a new standalone courthouse is
13 consistently higher than the cost of constructing an
14 annex and renovating the existing courthouse. Given
15 the significance of the investment of the existing
16 courthouse as well as the strong desire of the courts
17 to use the existing building, coupled with the fact
18 that the construction of a standalone facility is more
19 expensive, the new construction alternative was
20 dismissed.

21 Another option that was considered was
22 lease construction and under this alternative a new
23 courthouse would be built to GSA standards by a
24 developer and then leased back to the government. A
25 cost analysis by GSA has also indicated that the cost

1 of this alternative is significantly higher when
2 compared to cost for constructing an annex and
3 renovating the existing courthouse. As a result this
4 was also dismissed.

5 GSA is currently evaluating four sites
6 for the courthouse annex, the North Site, South Site,
7 East Site and West Site. I'm going to describe each
8 of these sites. One thing we would like you to keep
9 in mind is the East Site and the South Site are the
10 only two sites under which a courthouse annex could be
11 built directly adjacent to the existing courthouse.
12 You'll see that as we go through this.

13 The South Site is bounded by Bute Street
14 to the north, Granby Street to the west, Monticello
15 Avenue to the east, and Charlotte Street to the south.
16 Use of the southern site would entail closing Bute
17 Street between Granby and Monticello to allow the
18 construction of an attached annex as well as the
19 construction of a 6,000 square foot addition to the
20 north side of the existing courthouse in place of what
21 is now an existing small parking lot. The
22 historically significant Lofts at 500 Granby, formerly
23 the Showcase building which currently occupy the South
24 Site along with a small plaza are currently on that
25 site. If this site was selected, two lanes of

1 Monticello would be closed. This alternative would
2 also require the acquisition of the existing condo
3 units within the 500 Granby Street building.

4 The West Site which is located
5 immediately west of the courthouse is an area bounded
6 by Brambleton Avenue to the north, Bute Street to the
7 south, Granby Street to the east, and a north/south
8 line which is situated just east of the existing
9 telephone company building. Use of this site for
10 development of an annex would require the closing of
11 West York Street between approximately the telephone
12 company building and Granby Street. The annex might
13 be connected under this scenario to the existing
14 courthouse by a tunnel underneath Granby Street. The
15 2.4 acre site is currently occupied by surface parking
16 lots and several low rise commercial buildings, some
17 of which are considered to be of historic
18 significance. Ground was recently broken on this site
19 for a 31-story condominium building.

20 The North Site is bounded by Stark Street
21 to the north, Brambleton Avenue to the south,
22 Monticello Avenue to the east, and Granby Street to
23 the west. Use of this site for development of an
24 annex would not require the closure of surrounding
25 streets. The annex under this alternative may be

1 connected to the existing courthouse by either a
2 concourse underneath Brambleton Avenue or a bridge
3 over Brambleton Avenue. The bridge connection if
4 selected would be over 200 feet in length and there
5 would not be a connection on every floor. Potential
6 security issues with such a bridge have not been
7 studied at this point. The site's currently occupied
8 by the Greyhound Bus Station which may have historic
9 significance. In addition, the 500-year floodplain
10 covers approximately two-thirds of this site.

11 Lastly, the East Site is bounded by
12 Brambleton Boulevard to the north, Bute Street to the
13 south, the Scope Center to the east and the Hoffman
14 Courthouse to the west. Use of this site for
15 development of an annex would require the closing of
16 Monticello Avenue between Bute Street and Brambleton.
17 This alternative would impact traffic in the area and
18 the extent of these impacts is currently unknown but
19 would be studied as part of the Environmental
20 Assessment process.

21 Before I go on to explain these
22 processes, one thing I failed to note is that, in
23 fact, the South Site is currently GSA's preferred
24 alternative for the courthouse annex.

25 Now, as part of the selection process,

1 GSA is conducting activities to comply with the
2 National Environmental Policy Act, commonly known as
3 NEPA, and Section 106 of the National Historic
4 Preservation Act. NEPA is the national legislative
5 charter for the protection of the environment. NEPA
6 requires that Federal agencies such as GSA consider
7 the impacts of proposed actions prior to final site
8 selection.

9 Section 106 of the National Historic
10 Preservation Act requires agencies to consider the
11 effects of their actions on resources listed on or
12 eligible for listing on the National Register of
13 Historic Places. In compliance with Section 106 GSA
14 is consulting with the Virginia Department of Historic
15 Resources, which serves as the state's historic
16 preservation office.

17 In compliance with NEPA GSA is going to
18 be preparing an Environmental Assessment to assess
19 potential impacts of the proposed courthouse annex.
20 Scoping activities which include this public meeting
21 are being undertaken to identify potential issues and
22 alternatives which should be assessed in the
23 Environmental Assessment. GSA will then define the
24 final alternatives and assess the impacts to the
25 natural, the social and the cultural environments.

1 When complete GSA will issue a draft
2 Environmental Assessment for public review and
3 comment. This document will summarize the findings of
4 the impact analysis.

5 This document, the draft of our final
6 assessment, will be made available for a 30-day public
7 review period, and following that 30-day public review
8 if appropriate GSA will issue a finding of no
9 significant impact, or FONSI. That FONSI will
10 announce the final selection of the courthouse annex
11 site and define any mitigation measures that GSA will
12 undertake to minimize the impact to the environment.
13 Following issuance of the FONSI, GSA will begin site
14 acquisition, design and construction for the new
15 courthouse annex. If a finding of no significant
16 impact is not appropriate, GSA will undertake
17 preparation of what is called an Environmental Impact
18 Statement.

19 Now, in accordance with NEPA, GSA is, as
20 I said, preparing an Environmental Assessment. GSA's
21 objectives in conducting this EA is to ensure that all
22 natural, social and cultural environmental issues are
23 identified and considered in the decision-making
24 process. This meeting is one of the means that we
25 will use to inform residents and other interested

1 parties of the proposed action and perhaps most
2 importantly provide you a means of obtaining input --
3 GSA for obtaining input from you before making a final
4 decision. GSA will use the information contained in
5 the EA and your comments in deciding whether or not to
6 proceed with any of the proposed actions. And GSA
7 will take into account any and all relevant technical,
8 economic, mission and national environmental policy
9 considerations before issuing their final decision.

10 In compliance with the National Historic
11 Preservation Act, GSA will identify cultural
12 resources, including historic and archeological
13 resources that could be affected by the proposed
14 annex. GSA will then assess the effects of the
15 courthouse annex on these resources, and then lastly
16 GSA will work with consulting parties to develop
17 appropriate measures to mitigate any adverse effects
18 that the project may have.

19 The following slide shows the
20 Environmental Assessment schedule. During January and
21 February, 2006 the action alternatives will be defined
22 and impacts will be assessed. The draft EA, as I
23 said, will be published in March, 2006 and will be
24 available to the public for a 30-day review.
25 Following the public review period, if appropriate a

1 final Environmental Assessment will be issued in May
2 of 2006. And based on the findings of the final EA,
3 if appropriate a finding of no significant impact will
4 be issued. If a finding -- as I said previously, if a
5 finding of no significant impact is not appropriate,
6 an Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared,
7 which is a more detailed study.

8 Now, as GSA moves forward in preparing
9 the Environmental Assessment and conducting the 106
10 review process, we are seeking input on the proposed
11 action being analyzed, the alternatives to be studied
12 and issues you believe should be considered. We ask
13 that you submit your comments so that we can have a
14 formal record. We have written comment sheets for you
15 to do so. And we also have an e-mail which is posted
16 here for you to e-mail us any comments that you may
17 have. We are asking that all comment forms be
18 postmarked by February 1st, 2006 and then we also have
19 tonight's meeting to take your comments and questions.

20 So with that I would like to invite
21 people to the podium to speak in the order in which
22 you've signed up. We are asking that you give us your
23 name and spell it if necessary for the stenographer so
24 we can have an accurate record and, again, we're
25 asking for people to keep their comments to three

1 minutes. If you do have questions we are asking if
2 you can ask all of your questions and then I have
3 Mr. John Hewell with me tonight. He is the project
4 manager for the courthouse project -- I'm sorry --
5 Morrell -- John Morrell to help answer those
6 questions. If you could, if you have questions ask
7 them all and then John will come to the podium to
8 answer them.

9 The first person I have signed up to
10 speak is Susanne Williams.

11 MS. WILLIAMS: My name is Susanne
12 Williams and I am speaking on behalf of Mark
13 Perreault, president of the Norfolk Preservation
14 Alliance, was unable to attend the meeting tonight
15 because he is away on business. So I am reading to
16 you his prepared remarks. I do have a copy of these
17 remarks for your records.

18 Expansion of the Hoffman Federal
19 Courthouse should be accomplished in a fashion that
20 not only meets the needs of the court but respects its
21 neighbors, including historic resources, and
22 contributes as much as it can to the quality of life
23 and the continued resurgence of Downtown Norfolk. But
24 at this point we believe these worthy goals are not
25 being fully pursued by GSA and the court.

1 We say this because the options being
2 evaluated for court expansions, north, south, west and
3 now east, seem designed to result in a preordained
4 result, to go south and take historic Lofts at 500
5 Granby. Rather than a serious effort at finding a
6 successful formula to avoid such an unfortunate
7 result, the process appears merely an exercise to find
8 a plausible explanation for determining that there is
9 no option but destruction of an historic and vital
10 Downtown asset.

11 Among the evidence for this conclusion is
12 the citation of an executive order discouraging
13 construction of Federal facilities in 100-year
14 floodplains as precluding the northern option, a small
15 part of which is in a 500-year floodplain, not in a
16 100-year floodplain. Only slightly less revealing is
17 the emphasis on architectural unity. Of course, the
18 idea that the courthouse and its annex must be
19 architecturally unified is simply a subjective
20 opinion. It could just as easily be argued that the
21 annex should have its own character, that it should
22 and must be complementary to the historic courthouse
23 and that a physically connected addition, such as the
24 one in Wheeling, West Virginia, is too overwhelming
25 and stifles street life by creating a single use made

1 mega-block.

2 But even if architectural unity is a
3 valid goal, it is simply wrong that architectural
4 unity precludes a street between the buildings.
5 Architectural unity between the Hoffman Courthouse and
6 the annex on the Greyhound site can be achieved by
7 three different means: First, an addition in the
8 north parking lot that is designed to face and relate
9 well to the Greyhound annex; two, traffic calming and
10 streetscape changes and crosswalks on Brambleton; and,
11 three, appropriate design of the annex. But GSA and
12 the court have reportedly declined offers by the City
13 of Norfolk to assist in development of some conceptual
14 drawings of specific designs.

15 But most revealing is the artificially
16 structured manner in which the alternatives are
17 examined. Hybrid solutions, which are probably the
18 most likely to lead to a win-win solution, are not
19 being examined seriously, with only the north, south,
20 east and west unitary solutions getting some look.
21 What about a small annex on the Greyhound site,
22 combined with an additional floor for the Hoffman
23 Courthouse, an addition in the north parking lot
24 facing and relating to the annex on the Greyhound
25 site, a small addition to the south that would not

1 take the Lofts and an addition to the east which would
2 allow two lanes of traffic to remain on Monticello?
3 What about some or all of these things along with some
4 reorganization of the interior space in Hoffman, or
5 even some use of the basement? How about filling in
6 the courtyard on the courthouse, even perhaps a
7 thoughtfully designed tower rising above the existing
8 building? Why not utilize redundant structure, as in
9 the new Richmond courthouse, so as to allow new
10 building closer than 50 feet from the street? And
11 what about reconsidering the need for all of the
12 additional space initially identified, in light of the
13 possibility future projected caseloads may not be as
14 great as originally thought?

15 There simply has to be a satisfactory
16 solution for a modernized and expanded Hoffman
17 Courthouse that does not involve destruction of the
18 historic Lofts at 500. And it is not insignificant
19 that avoiding the need for their condemnation in favor
20 of accepting the city's likely donation of the
21 Greyhound site will save millions of dollars for the
22 Federal Government. The Federal Government should be
23 an example here, not only of wise judicial and civic
24 planning, but also of financial stewardship.

25 Thank you very much.

1 MS. GLYNN: Next speaker we have is

2 Mr. Ben Bines.

3 MR. BINES: My name is Ben Bines. I'm an

4 FA control pilot over at NAS Oceana. First I would

5 like to thank GSA and its members for this very

6 important meeting tonight. We are here to discuss

7 more than just the fate of 24 homes. We are here to

8 discuss and prevent a dangerous precedent from being

9 set. No matter how we look at this situation, the

10 facts remain unchanged. The courthouse has known its

11 need for expansion for a number of years. There are a

12 number of viable alternatives available to the GSA

13 that don't include taking citizens' homes.

14 Prospective land sites for expansion are rapidly being

15 used for real estate development and the City of

16 Norfolk would like to keep the courthouse within its

17 borders.

18 Complaining about how this situation

19 could have been solved to a significant lower cost to

20 the taxpayers if the GSA and courthouse acted before

21 the rapid increase in the land development is

22 irrelevant to this discussion but something that

23 should not be forgotten. What we should concentrate

24 on is preventing this situation from setting a bad

25 precedent that allows the ineffectiveness and

1 mismanagement to be solved by hurting the lowest
2 common denominator, the citizens. It should outrage
3 every homeowner and prospective homeowner that the
4 government feels that they can take our homes and send
5 us away with a pat on the back and a heartfelt apology
6 when many alternatives still exist.

7 I am not going to list all the
8 suggestions that have been presented to the GSA both
9 officially and unofficially, but they are many. The
10 common response is that there are policies in place
11 that for one reason or another make the suggestions
12 less desirable than taking 24 homes. I say policies
13 are easier to relocate than people. There is no way
14 in this day and age that any difficulty the GSA and
15 the courthouse seen with alternative proposals cannot
16 be overcome with some creative construction and policy
17 changes.

18 Bottom line is that these proposals are
19 less convenient. Well, there was plenty of time to
20 put convenience before necessity, but that time was
21 lost, not by those living at 500 but the government
22 administration that we pay our tax dollars to see that
23 situations like this don't exist.

24 We need look no further than Virginia
25 Beach for a policy worthy of emulation. Faced with

1 the possibility of losing their master base, they
2 didn't tuck tail and allow their citizens' homes to be
3 destroyed. They worked countless hours in the face of
4 continuous closure threats to find a policy that would
5 save the base and the homes and businesses that
6 surrounded it. Condemnation was the last resort in
7 Virginia Beach's eyes and it should be in ours as
8 well. Thank you.

9 MS. GLYNN: Next speaker is Mr. Baxter
10 Simmons.

11 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: I'm Baxter Simmons,
12 Sr. My son, Baxter, Jr. owns the Baxter Sports Lounge
13 which will be affected on the ground floor of the
14 building in question. Would you like the further
15 questions while I'm making my comments? Would that be
16 easier? One of the questions that I have is what are
17 the projected security costs to go across to the
18 Greyhound site? I kept hearing at the last hearing
19 it's so much more expensive. That's a pretty vague
20 term. If it was considered properly, then there would
21 be a budget number to answer that question. The other
22 consideration as I heard in the presentation tonight
23 is you are eliminating basically the Greyhound site
24 and yet no one has really thoroughly studied the
25 corridor situation, either the ramp over or the tunnel

1 under, as was presented tonight in the comments. So
2 my question is if you haven't really considered that
3 site, why are we zeroing in on a site that generates
4 the amount of tax dollars, historical site and many
5 other pro reasons before we've actually legitimately
6 considered the Greyhound site.

7 And the other question that I've got, as
8 I read the Executive Order as it relates to
9 floodplains which was discussed a little bit last
10 time, the Executive Order as I read it nowhere in that
11 order states that you can't build on a floodplain. It
12 only says that you have to do certain things, and the
13 floodplain as it exists over there is only on the
14 corner of the property and only relates to a two-foot
15 dimension. So we are talking about something that
16 really doesn't come into play and yet we were told
17 last time we can't build on that property because it's
18 a floodplain. If you could answer those questions for
19 me, I would appreciate it.

20 My basic comments are this -- and I'll
21 keep them short -- Baxter's Sports Lounge will
22 generate in the 20-year lease that it has on that
23 building in excess of \$6- to \$7 million in tax revenue
24 for this city. That has nothing to do with the 24
25 condominiums above it. It has nothing to do with the

1 historical value of the building which actually is an
2 older building and has more historical value than the
3 courthouse. I'm not suggesting we don't keep both of
4 them. I'm suggesting that that building has more
5 historical value. I'm suggesting that we jumped
6 through many hoops to meet the Virginia Historical
7 Resources Commission's requests and Design Review
8 Committee and the City of Norfolk to preserve the
9 heritage of that building and it cost us a lot of
10 money to do that but we were on the team that wanted
11 to make it happen. And what I am suggesting to GSA is
12 that they need to be on the team to make it happen so
13 that it works for everyone.

14 I am really concerned about the fact that
15 GSA made the comment, and I say GSA, one of the
16 persons made the comment at the last meeting that
17 their clients were the judges. Let me be perfectly
18 clear about this: Your clients are not the judges.
19 The clients are the taxpayers of this city and this
20 nation who sit here and watch you spend millions and
21 millions and millions of dollars to destroy a building
22 that is a good building, an historical building and a
23 tax revenue building in favor of building a tunnel or
24 a bridge to go across the street and do what you need
25 to do in its sincerity. So it doesn't even make any

1 sense, but to tell me that the client is the judges,
2 sorry. I don't buy that. Your clients are the
3 taxpayers, and GSA is not so far removed from that
4 entity that they can just do what they want to do at
5 the expense of others.

6 You have to justify your position, and I
7 can tell you standing right here if you can justify to
8 Baxter Simmons, Sr. that that's the site to build on
9 over the other sites you'll never hear a word out of
10 me, not one word, but I can also tell you there is no
11 way, absolutely no way, under no conditions and under
12 no scenario that you can justify taking that south
13 site over that Greyhound site. There is no
14 justification that you can offer that would work in
15 that scenario. So I want you to know that we're going
16 to be completely on top of this. We have built a
17 restaurant there that is part of my son's future, and
18 I can tell you you'll hear from me until my dying day
19 if you pursue that South Site and you have to
20 understand how a father is as it relates to his son.

21 I'm sure you-all have a similar situation, father of
22 sons and daughters, but be sure that we will be
23 watching every move that's made as it relates to
24 taking that South Site.

25 MS. GLYNN: John, if you would like to
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1 come up and answer the questions.

2 MR. MORRELL: Thank you for being candid.

3 Just to address one issue you brought up, the

4 taxpayers are one of our customers. We have many

5 stakeholders in this project. The judges aren't the

6 only stakeholder. The taxpayers aren't the only

7 stakeholder. We have the city, politicians, we have

8 our GSA office that we have to answer to. We have

9 other Federal agencies that are going in the building

10 as well, the community, the Historic Preservation

11 people. So we have a lot of people we answer to. We

12 are trying to take care of everybody. We are trying

13 to address everybody's issues as best we can. We are

14 evaluating every alternative and we appreciate you

15 bringing up anything new that we're not looking at.

16 On behalf of Mark Perreault, he brought

17 up some good issues today, some things we didn't think

18 about that we will look at. The Greyhound bus station

19 site is in a floodplain. This is no debate about

20 that. Mostly two-thirds of the site is in a 500-year

21 floodplain. There is a small portion in a 100-year

22 floodplain. Executive Order 988 states that we should

23 not build in a floodplain. GSA goes further than

24 that. We have copies of those in the back. When you

25 are leaving we can provide that. It's not the only

1 reason. There is some functional issues involved with
2 building on the North Site. There's a seven-lane
3 major highway that runs between the North Site and the
4 existing courthouse. One of our primary goals is to
5 preserve the Hoffman Courthouse. It's on a National
6 Register as an historic building. It's a prominent
7 building in Norfolk. We want to keep that as a
8 district courthouse. There's only four ways to expand
9 the building, north, east, south, or west. We are
10 looking at all alternatives.

11 The bridge or tunnel, it's possible to do
12 either. The function of the court to keep it a
13 unified complex and to keep the functionality there,
14 it's most efficient if we can connect on every floor.
15 When people do business it's easier to connect on
16 every floor and you can walk close by and do your
17 business. If you have to walk a half a block or a
18 block away to talk to somebody you need to do business
19 with, it's less efficient. There are several reasons
20 why we wouldn't go there or why it's a less optimal
21 alternative for us and for the courts.

22 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: What are the reasons?

23 MR. MORRELL: The functionality --

24 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: You didn't answer my
25 question. What are the reasons?

1 MR. MORRELL: The operation of that
2 courthouse and splitting up the function and working
3 together, it just breaks it apart. You can't operate
4 or you can operate but it's less efficient.

5 MS. PARET: Duplication of security.

6 MR. MORRELL: Duplication of security,
7 where we would have to build alley ports.

8 MR. BINES: This relates specifically to
9 this.

10 MS. GLYNN: We would like to be able to
11 give everyone who signed up an opportunity to speak.
12 If you could wait until the end.

13 MR. BINES: I just would like to know in
14 your personal opinion as a project manager if it was
15 your house on the line, would you want business
16 efficiency because someone can't walk up and down the
17 stairs quite as fast as they can walk through a
18 doorway --

19 MR. MORRELL: If it was my home, if I was
20 treated fairly I --

21 MR. BINES: Come on.

22 MR. MORRELL: I'm being honest with you.

23 MR. BINES: Would you want to lose your
24 home and the reason somebody gave you was business
25 efficiency be enough of a reason to say, you know

1 what, you are right, here are the keys?

2 MR. MORRELL: If I was treated fairly in
3 the process. If at the end of the day I said, you
4 know what, that's a good deal, I walked away from this
5 with a great deal, yes, I would be --

6 MR. BINES: My next question, do you
7 think companies like Bank of America, Fidelity, those
8 people who live and work in sky-rise buildings, who
9 have offices on the fiftieth floor, don't have
10 business efficiency?

11 MR. MORRELL: I'm sure they do.

12 MR. BINES: Why wouldn't there be any
13 reason you couldn't do it in the courthouse?

14 MR. MORRELL: I wasn't finished speaking
15 to Mr. Baxter. If you build in the north site, it
16 would be building basically a separate courthouse. We
17 would have two entrances. We wouldn't try and combine
18 functions. If we were to go north, we would abandon
19 the whole idea altogether and abandon Hoffman and look
20 for a totally new site. It wouldn't make sense for us
21 to go there. It wouldn't make sense for our client to
22 go there. We are looking at this. We are not closing
23 the door.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What did you just
25 say?

1 MR. MORRELL: About which part?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: If something

3 didn't work you were --

4 MR. MORRELL: If we were going to go

5 north?

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Which is the

7 Greyhound site.

8 MR. MORRELL: Which is the Greyhound

9 site, we would consider a whole new courthouse

10 altogether. One of our primary goals is to try and

11 keep Hoffman in the inventory of GSA and try and keep

12 it as a predominant courthouse in Norfolk.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So no way north is

14 what you are saying?

15 MS. GLYNN: No site -- no alternatives

16 are off the table at this point. GSA must consider

17 them all. They must consider them all through this

18 NEPA process and they are doing so. They have

19 identified a preferred site and it is appropriate

20 under NEPA to identify a preferred site and let you

21 know what that is. I appreciate everyone having

22 questions and comments, but I truly do want to give

23 the people who signed up to give a chance to speak. I

24 understand this is a difficult situation for many of

25 you and very personal, so we definitely want to give

1 everyone an opportunity. If after everyone who signed
2 up to speak --

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm being told you
4 are not taking the questions from the media. Why is
5 that?

6 MS. GLYNN: The next person --

7 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: Wait a minute. He
8 didn't answer my question about the cost of the budget
9 of the security.

10 MS. GLYNN: Answer the question for the
11 cost of the bridge or the tunnel.

12 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: The question was there
13 were several comments made in the first meeting about
14 security cost but there was never a number. If, in
15 fact, the examination of that property was legitimate,
16 there's got to be a budget number of what this
17 additional or duplicate cost is.

18 MR. MORRELL: This study isn't totally
19 complete. We are looking. We didn't rule it out.
20 The study is not complete. The costs are not
21 complete. This meeting is to make sure we are
22 addressing all the issues.

23 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: And I won't belabor
24 this. You just said you-all are ruling that site out
25 in favor of another location for the courthouse if

1 that's the way you have to go. That's what you said.

2 MR. MORRELL: That's not what we said.

3 We said this is our preferred alternative based on the
4 information we got right now.

5 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: I got that part.

6 MR. MORRELL: Then we didn't rule out any
7 sites at this point.

8 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: You slipped, John.

9 You said that.

10 MR. MORRELL: If I said that I make a
11 correction.

12 MS. GLYNN: The next speaker we do have
13 is Mr. Blount Hunter. I hope I said your name
14 correctly.

15 MR. HUNTER: My name is Blount Hunter.
16 I'm speaking as an individual. I have some prepared
17 notes, but given what has been said I'm going to
18 depart from them so if you'll bear with me. The
19 purpose of tonight's public meeting is to assess the
20 environmental impact of expansion alternatives for the
21 Federal courthouse versus a do nothing scenario. I'm
22 not sure that the do nothing scenario has even been in
23 the conversation. This process provides an
24 opportunity to look ahead, for us to embrace the
25 courthouse and encourage the interior reconfigurations

1 needed to provide security for judges and court
2 personnel.

3 This hearing provides an opportunity for
4 members of the community to express their concern that
5 the GSA is not fully considering all feasible
6 expansion options equally and to request that the case
7 for moving south onto the site of The Lofts at 500 be
8 considered as one of several viable expansion options
9 and not necessarily the most beneficial option of the
10 City of Norfolk.

11 If an Environmental Assessment relates to
12 historic resources, cultural fabric and economic
13 development, I would suggest that the Federal
14 Government which is the largest player contributing to
15 the physical stress of the City of Norfolk where 49
16 percent of the land is off the tax records could
17 really impact the economic environment of the city by
18 not taking existing buildings or land that is
19 privately owned and by giving a little bit of extra
20 emphasis in the decision-making process to land that
21 is already owned by the city, land that everyone would
22 agree is not used to its highest and best use and land
23 which is not returning tax revenues to the city today.

24 We've heard about north, south, east,
25 west. We haven't gotten a lot of attention to going

1 up and nobody has really talked about infilling the
2 atrium that exists already in that building. I think
3 all of these options are worthy of equal attention.
4 It's fair to say, and it hasn't been said yet, that
5 the zeroing in on the South Site is being driven by
6 the preferences of one or two individual judges, who
7 if they had equal zeal for the North Site we would be
8 here now extolling the virtues of the North Site or
9 the GSA would be doing that. I think it's all too
10 clear that the judges are the clients here.

11 This community expects no less rigorous
12 consideration of all expansion alternatives than would
13 be given to an icon site in Washington, D.C. or any
14 other major city. Not all alternatives have been
15 examined to the fullest extent possible. Applicable
16 Executive Orders allow greater flexibility than the
17 GSA admits. To date the process has been driven by
18 the judges' preferences primarily and secondarily by
19 operational convenience of the GSA such as a desire to
20 have one building and one secure entry with one metal
21 detector versus two buildings with two entries and two
22 metal detectors.

23 Some site alternatives appear to have
24 been examined only from the perspective of citing
25 reasons not to select them, despite issues that can be

1 easily overcome. Just as I am not a proponent of one
2 option, neither should the GSA be a cheerleader for a
3 single solution at this time. The GSA's announced
4 intention to expand to the south or preference to
5 expand to the south is premature. There are too many
6 possibilities to allow moving south to be viewed as
7 the only viable alternative for expansion. The city
8 and the public must become full partners with the
9 judges and the GSA in this significant urban planning
10 opportunity.

11 MS. GLYNN: Thank you very much. The
12 next speaker we have signed up is Chris Malendoski.

13 MR. MALENDOSKI: My name is Chris
14 Malendoski, marketing director of the Wright Company,
15 the listing broker for the development called The
16 Lofts at 500 Granby. 500 Granby is a federally
17 registered historical landmark designed by Clarence
18 Neff, local architect to such landmarks as Maury High
19 School and the Cavalier Hotel at Virginia Beach, is in
20 jeopardy today. Over the past five years we have been
21 working on its redevelopment and the recent
22 culmination has been the sale of most of the units,
23 sold at an unprecedented premium attracting exactly
24 the target market that any Downtown would want to
25 attract, namely people with means who want to live in

1 a vibrant urban area and who spend more money to help
2 the economy flow. Add to that the recent success of
3 our star restaurant tenant on the first floor,
4 Baxter's. The cloud over the fate of this building is
5 not fair to the owners in and of itself, but that has
6 not stopped people from purchasing completely, neither
7 has it stopped our optimism.

8 Norfolk is de facto the center of our
9 metro statistical area in every way, financial,
10 educational, arts and culture and Federal concerns.
11 Let me preface this to the GSA, the courthouse
12 officials, and to the honorable judges by stealing a
13 quote from an old friend of all of ours, Uncle Sam,
14 "We want you." Having said that, it remains plainly
15 obvious to us and to the general public that all
16 creative options for the Hoffman Courthouse expansion
17 have not been explored. Indeed in our own AIA report
18 from 2004, this is cited, quote, of the need to
19 approach new construction in historic areas with
20 sensitivity to historic urban context and of
21 successful approaches for doing so.

22 Allow me to offer just one possible
23 solution out of the many that have been offered
24 tonight. Granby Tower is constructed as planned, The
25 Lofts at 500 and Baxter's remain a fixture in

1 Downtown, and Monticello Avenue is closed off north of
2 Charlotte Street and east of the Hoffman building. In
3 this way the courthouse gets all of the setback it
4 needs while creative architects design a new
5 contemporary vertical and lateral addition with lots
6 of glass on the east face of the building to capture
7 the morning light.

8 Think of the facts. In a few years light
9 rail will zoom up north on Monticello Avenue and then
10 take a dogleg westward along the south side of
11 Charlotte Street. For years the city has needed a
12 good east/west corridor to transport its emergency
13 vehicles. The answer is an expanded Charlotte Street
14 and that's no secret. That's been on the books for a
15 while. The iconic monumental presence of the new
16 Hoffman Courthouse atrium will sit at the end of the
17 street but not too closely to light rail. Think about
18 that. The terminus of Monticello Avenue at Charlotte
19 can serve as an entrance to ample underground parking
20 for all the courthouse staff. Above a spectacular
21 promenade winds its way between Hoffman and Scope.
22 Everybody wins.

23 It's helpful to remember that this
24 country was created of the people, by the people and
25 for the people. We should not generate our building

1 plans based upon fear rather than optimism. God bless
2 our fare city and God bless the US of A.

3 MS. GLYNN: Thank you very much.

4 Ms. Karen Perreault.

5 MS. PERREAULT: Good evening. I'm going
6 to speak just as a citizen at large this evening. I
7 am very upset about the wastage that is being proposed
8 in taking over the South Site. As a Federal taxpayer
9 I just -- I find it outrageous that we can just throw
10 away the millions of dollars that it requires to take
11 over that property. I'm upset about the thought of
12 losing that building. It's fabulous and it's a
13 wonderful site for those who are fortunate enough to
14 live there and park Downtown. I just feel that there
15 are too many options to have to destroy any property.
16 There's going to be a 31-floor building across the
17 street. I don't see why this one can't go up as well.
18 I think it might help balance the entrance to
19 Downtown.

20 I'm not familiar with the actual design
21 and the space that makes up the courtyard inside of
22 the building, but I can't see -- the building itself
23 is so massive, I have to think that there ought to be
24 an opportunity to go up, that the building itself can
25 support several additional floors above. The idea of

1 closing off part of Monticello, perhaps filling in the
2 parking areas that exist now around the building, it
3 seems to make much more sense than wasting anything.
4 I just think this is insane to think of tearing down
5 that building and buying out the owners there and just
6 eliminating all of that. It just seems there are too
7 many other better solutions. I hope it gets serious
8 attention. Thank you.

9 MS. GLYNN: Thank you very much. Next
10 speaker we have Mr. Baxter Simmons, Jr.

11 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: My name is Baxter
12 Simmons, Jr., son of the fire-up father over there and
13 owner of Baxter's Sports Lounge, new business that
14 opened about three weeks ago. John, I know you are in
15 a tough position, but I'm going to fire a few
16 questions at you. You knew that was coming. First of
17 all, in reading the Executive Orders, one of the
18 things that has come to light in my understanding from
19 the economic department of the city is part of the
20 goal when building a public building is to stimulate
21 growth and social and cultural experience in an urban
22 area. The economic development office has said they
23 would encourage the growth north because that would
24 bring the Ghent area, tie it into Downtown. It would
25 stimulate growth across Brambleton Avenue which is

1 creating a barrier for the Downtown growth. How does
2 GSA explain trying to go south when the economic
3 development of the city has asked you to go north?

4 It appears in the presentation that the
5 Environmental Assessment is going to be done on one
6 site and one site only, or are all four of those going
7 to be done at the same time and all four presented?
8 It appears like the south is going to come out and if
9 there is no FONSI or significant impact that we're not
10 going to bother with the other three. That's another
11 question I have. You mentioned in the new annex, what
12 other Federal agencies are going in there, why is it
13 crucial to have those Federal agencies in that
14 building and why couldn't they be relocated to another
15 area close by or an adjacent building somewhere in the
16 neighborhood?

17 The big one for me, though, and I'm not
18 saying I don't trust what I'm hearing, but the term
19 from the presentation tonight and from the last
20 presentation is the expenses, and it's going to be
21 more expensive here and it's going to be more
22 expensive there, and as the son of an old politician I
23 know how we dance around issues and we creatively word
24 the truth. There might be an expense but until I hear
25 an actual number I can't in my heart believe that

1 anybody has done a valid survey or study to say,
2 because people can tell me there's a \$75 million
3 budget for the South Site for that property, well,
4 what is the actual proposed cost of a completely new
5 construction on the North Site, what is the cost of
6 the renovation, do the land value savings on the
7 renovation of the existing building versus purchasing
8 land and buying homeowners and business out at \$11-,
9 \$15-, \$20 million, do they balance out and the budget
10 comes out at the end? It always appears that it's
11 more expensive, more costly, but if somebody can tell
12 me a new 400,000 square foot courthouse ten stories
13 high on the Greyhound site would cost \$300 million
14 versus \$75-, I could sleep with ruling out a brand new
15 courthouse. But if somebody can't tell me an actual
16 number on that, I can't believe that the option has
17 not been explored enough. So when I can hear those
18 numbers I'm not going to say I'll sleep better, but I
19 might actually sleep.

20 My other thing, when we sit here and talk
21 about efficiency versus homes and efficiency, I think
22 the gentleman raised a good point, a 30-story building
23 you've got to go down 15 floors, around the corner
24 just like you have to walk across the barrier. What
25 you have to look at, my business in the first three

1 weeks has had 8,000 people come through its doors. I
2 would venture to say that's beating every other
3 restaurant in Downtown Norfolk and maybe other than a
4 couple of places at Waterside. I think it's having a
5 great significant cultural impact on what's going on
6 in Downtown. I've heard nothing but rave reviews.

7 I've seen The Lofts. They are beautiful
8 condos. People have gone and spent a premium as Chris
9 said. These are the people that Downtown has tried to
10 attract for so long, and to use the general business
11 efficiency statement, maybe that is the reason, but
12 what needs to be shown is that an annex in a separate
13 building just period can't work for business
14 efficiency reasons. To say that, okay, we might have
15 to stagger that a judge walks from his chambers at ten
16 after the hour and a prisoner walks from the holding
17 cell on the hour so they don't cross, I understand
18 that's a problem we're having now. That's a business
19 efficiency. Is that worth taking away 24 homes and a
20 business?

21 I know I've shouted a bunch of questions
22 at you. It will probably take you a little while to
23 answer. My other thing on the floodplain, it's my
24 understanding that the foundation of the building only
25 has to be raised two feet to be brought out of the

1 floodplain. Correct me if I'm wrong, but if that's
2 the case in the architectural design of the building
3 can it not be built up two feet to escape the
4 floodplain? That's all I have. I'll let you --

5 MS. GLYNN: Would you like me to address
6 the floodplain first?

7 MR. MORRELL: Sure.

8 MS. GLYNN: I would like to address the
9 floodplain issue for you first. Each city and town
10 has their own floodplain regulations and Norfolk may
11 say it has to be raised two feet above the floodplain.
12 The Federal Executive Order does not allow GSA to
13 build within the floodplain if there is a feasible
14 alternative to doing so. In addition, GSA's
15 administrative order does not allow critical actions,
16 and the courthouse is considered a critical action, to
17 be built in a 500- or 100-year floodplain. That's the
18 reason. It's not they are not complying with the city
19 regulations, it's a Federal statute or Executive
20 Order.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: If I could
22 interrupt. It's related to what you are saying. That
23 differentiation, though, between GSA and the Executive
24 Order is critical, because -- and this is a little bit
25 deceiving because it does not say in the Executive

1 Order -- that's the first thing I did after the last
2 meeting.

3 MS. GLYNN: If you want to give a comment
4 on that, sign up.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. I will.
6 It's already signed up. You'll see me in a few
7 minutes.

8 MR. MORRELL: I'm going to try to answer
9 some of your questions. The first issue you had was
10 stimulating growth north and why aren't we supporting
11 that?

12 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: Well, the economic
13 development office has said by going north you would
14 help stimulate the growth between Downtown and Ghent
15 to help tie in that area. That's been their preferred
16 site selection and my understanding is the Executive
17 Order that's one of the things that a public building
18 and urban setting place is supposed to do. By going
19 south, the economic development department has said
20 that will stifle growth, stifle social and cultural
21 effect and basically create a dark corner after 5:00
22 in the evening. So how do you get around that part of
23 the Executive Order?

24 MR. MORRELL: To me that's an opinion
25 because if we don't build a courthouse, does that mean

1 that corner is stifled? If we don't build a
2 courthouse anywhere, does that mean that corner of the
3 city is stifled by not going north? Because somebody
4 has an opinion that we should build north doesn't mean
5 that we should build north. We are evaluating all the
6 different aspects of that item, all the surrounding
7 sites. When the day is done we evaluate the pros and
8 cons of every site and whatever made sense for as many
9 people as we can please, that's what we're going to
10 have to go with.

11 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: Can you do a survey?
12 I'll bet you get a lot of people for going north.

13 MR. MORRELL: Like I said, there are many
14 stakeholders involved in the project and we are trying
15 to do what's right. We are not trying to take your
16 business. That's not our goal. If it happens to be
17 the preferred alternative, our goal is to make sure
18 you are taken care of properly. We are not here to
19 throw anybody out of their homes as a primary goal. I
20 know you have a lot vested in your business, not just
21 financially but I know when I do my job I put
22 everything into it and I'm proud of what I do and I
23 take ownership of what I do. So I know exactly where
24 you are coming from.

25 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: I appreciate that.

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1 But I guess what I'm saying is when the city's
2 position is go north, we'll help you go north, then
3 they are representing two hundred plus thousand people
4 there and you say you are trying to please the
5 greatest number of people. I would think that would
6 outweigh a few judges. What I'm wondering is what's
7 the answer you give to the city saying, Hey, I'm
8 sorry --

9 MR. MORRELL: We've been working with the
10 city and the South Site is actually their proposal.

11 So we are trying to come to a compromise.

12 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: The South Site is
13 their proposal?

14 MR. MORRELL: Is that okay to say? Yes.
15 When we were evaluating different sites, the south did
16 not work for us originally in terms of acreage. We
17 needed to get a 50-foot setback on our building for
18 security purposes. The original South Site does not
19 work with a 50-foot setback. The city came in with
20 the proposal to enlarge the South Site so we can build
21 there.

22 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: That was a reproposal
23 to avoid taking Granby Tower. That wasn't their first
24 choice of sites.

25 MR. MORRELL: You are correct.

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1 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: That wasn't their
2 first choice of site.

3 MR. MORRELL: No.

4 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: The first choice is
5 the North Site, correct?

6 MR. MORRELL: And we could debate the
7 reasons why we're not --

8 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: I'm just asking you is
9 that correct?

10 MR. MORRELL: Yes. Depends what year you
11 ask that question, too, because that opinion changed
12 over the years.

13 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: Ten years ago you
14 could have taken it and nobody cared because we hadn't
15 developed it. It sat on the back burner too long.

16 MR. MORRELL: I'm not saying anybody was
17 pushing this whole process. We have all gone through
18 a development and we are where we are. Looking at the
19 past, like you said, doesn't get us anywhere, but we
20 have the information at hand right now and we are
21 doing the best we can. The EA, we are not just
22 looking at the South Site in the EA. We will address
23 everything we're talking about tonight. Anything new
24 that's put on the table we will address that in the EA
25 as well.

1 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: Are there four or one
2 EA?

3 MR. MORRELL: It will be one EA that will
4 address all issues. You will have the 30-day period
5 to comment on it and we'll republish it in a final
6 document and capture all the comments and address all
7 the comments on all four sites in addition to anything
8 else that is proposed.

9 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: What if there is no
10 significant impact on any of the other sites? If it
11 comes back there is no significant impact on the South
12 Site, what if there is no significant impact on the
13 North Site?

14 MS. GLYNN: If there were a significant
15 impact that could affect GSA's decision, GSA's
16 decision will be documented in the finding of no
17 significant impact. That finding will be for the one
18 selected site. That selection will be based on more
19 than just the findings of the Environmental
20 Assessment. It will be on mission, economics, and a
21 variety of other issues.

22 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: Historical.

23 MS. GLYNN: Right. If that were the
24 North Site, GSA would want to be able to issue a
25 finding of no significant impact for the North Site,

1 the east or the west, but it will be -- the EA will
2 analyze all four sites in detail.

3 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: But it will be one
4 report that will analyze all four and at the end it
5 will be this is a finding of the preferred site.

6 MS. GLYNN: And selected site --

7 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: And will it have
8 reasons that the others aren't as desirable?

9 MS. GLYNN: It will give the reasons the
10 selected site is selected. I can't at this time --

11 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: You understand
12 what I'm talking about?

13 MS. GLYNN: I do understand. I can't
14 prejudge where it's going to go. I can't say that.

15 MR. MORRELL: Other agencies in the
16 annex, the main reason for this project is the
17 expansion of the courts, more courtrooms, more space.
18 A lot of the Hoffman Courthouse does not meet the
19 court design in terms of courtroom sizes, ceiling
20 heights, operations of the courts. We need to have
21 the proper layout for juries, for stenographers, for
22 judges, make sure the sight lines are okay and
23 courtroom sizes are --

24 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: Square footage.

25 MR. MORRELL: Square footage, layout. So

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1 the main reason for the annex is additional courtrooms
2 primarily. Other court agencies are expanding as well
3 which will add to the square footage, but right now
4 it's looking like no matter what site we build on it's
5 at least six new courtrooms going in that building.
6 We cannot add on to Hoffman to accommodate those
7 courtrooms. That has to be understood. Infilling the
8 Hoffman Courthouse will not do that. Adding a fifth
9 floor will not do that. Along with those proposals,
10 which are good proposals -- we did look at them --
11 comes to impacts of the existing courthouse staying in
12 operation. If we were to do renovations like that,
13 which it can be done, but if we were to do that it
14 becomes costly. It's tough to renovate to that extent
15 without finding leased space and moving people out
16 while you are trying to -- it's tough to operate in
17 that environment while that renovation is going on.

18 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: I understand. What's
19 the number? You understand where I'm coming from.
20 Until you tell me there's a number, don't tell me it's
21 costly because these people losing their homes don't
22 want to hear it's costly. They want to know if it's
23 going to cost \$270 million versus \$75 million. To say
24 it's costly doesn't --

25 MR. MORRELL: I'm going to address a
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1 little bit of the cost issue later in one of your
2 further questions.

3 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: That would be great.
4 I appreciate that.

5 MR. MORRELL: But if we had to lease
6 space, it's basically building a new courthouse as
7 leased space and I can throw out the number now. The
8 new courthouse dollar per square foot numbers that are
9 coming out now from our central office to build a new
10 courthouse is roughly \$450 to \$500 a square foot. So
11 it is costly in terms of the security requirements
12 that are required for a new courthouse in terms of
13 progressive collapse, stiffening the building for
14 blasts, among other things, but the number we are
15 getting from central office -- and we have somebody
16 that can confirm that so I'm not on the hot seat the
17 whole time.

18 So in terms of new construction, this
19 follows your next question, if we were to build a
20 courthouse that's twice the size of the annex that
21 we're proposing, doubles the number, the square foot
22 numbers should give approximately the same.
23 Renovation of the existing Hoffman which we intend to
24 do after we build the annex is a lot less cost per
25 square foot than building new. We can't do as much to

1 an existing structure as we would to a --

2 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: You can't find some
3 efficiencies in your square footage as far as traffic
4 patterns?

5 MR. MORRELL: As far as the renovation of
6 Hoffman, we are looking to --

7 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: No, in a new facility.

8 MR. MORRELL: In a new facility you will
9 find more efficiency.

10 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: If you had 200,000 in
11 Hoffman and 200,000 in the new annex, couldn't you
12 build a 300,000 square foot new facility that would be
13 more efficient?

14 MR. MORRELL: It would be more
15 efficiency. To the extent of cutting it down to where
16 you are going, I don't think that's possible but we'll
17 look at it.

18 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: You are still more
19 expensive than the annex. I'm still looking at the
20 (inaudible) value of the brand new courthouse and the
21 brand new facility for an extra \$30 million and not
22 kicking people out of their homes and losing business.
23 Just curious.

24 MR. MORRELL: Did I address all your
25 questions? We got into the functionality of the

1 courts but we can debate that all night.

2 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: As far as the
3 questions go, I'm still looking for a cost number on
4 if you were to go north. And I'm not trying to put
5 this on you but you did slip and say if we were to go
6 north we would consider a whole other site. I'm not
7 holding you to that, but I want to make sure that was
8 on the record. I still don't have a number of what
9 two metal detectors is going to cost, two separate
10 security and two this, that and the other, and that is
11 a big factor.

12 MS. GLYNN: GSA does not have that cost
13 information here tonight. We understand your concern.

14 MR. MORRELL: But that's just not the
15 only reason.

16 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: But if we can mitigate
17 the other reasons and avoid the other reasons and that
18 becomes the only reason, that might be a solution that
19 we can find.

20 MS. GLYNN: We have other people that
21 have to speak, so we don't keep having the back and
22 forth. If you would like to come up and speak again
23 feel free. Next person we have to speak is Mr. Henry
24 Shriver.

25 MR. SHRIVER: Henry Shriver, I'm a
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1 citizen of the City of Norfolk. I'm looking around
2 the assemblage here. I don't know how many of you are
3 older than the Federal courthouse, but I do remember
4 watching them build it in my younger years, but I'm
5 not here specifically on an historic mission, although
6 I think it's extremely important to preserve a
7 building as a piece of architecture and it's one of
8 those buildings that would be very difficult to use
9 for anything else. I mean, it was a post office and
10 they made it into a courthouse rather well. I would
11 like to emphasize that at the top of the list there
12 are priorities. I think it very important that the
13 courthouse remain in the City of Norfolk and I think
14 it's well located in the north end of the main
15 commercial district as it exists today anyway as a
16 generator and activity and an anchor.

17 What my point is, though, is to look at
18 what's being done in other places and what I think
19 might really be done here. Several people have
20 alluded to it and I think there was some reference to
21 it earlier and that is the concept of going
22 vertically. Looking at the building there is not
23 really enough space in the hole in the donut to really
24 do much with, but it would greatly facilitate the
25 exercise of going vertically because it could house

1 and carry certain shaftways that would be essential to
2 efficiently and effectively do a building. Listening
3 to some of the numbers it might be in the eight- to
4 ten-story range above it. You say architecturally
5 what will the historic people say. It has been done
6 many times successfully, being done in New York now
7 for a building on the National Register, a building
8 that most of us here know which is Grand Central
9 Terminal in the middle of Park Avenue in New York
10 City. That building is -- you are talking about
11 something complicated, it's a very traditional
12 building filled with the embellishments of a high
13 period in architecture, but it was originally designed
14 to carry a ten-story addition. That was a very
15 interesting fact, but I think -- now, when some people
16 dismiss it and say when you have to go through the
17 building with columns and structure you are going to
18 completely disrupt it for the entire construction
19 period, maybe up to two years or more, that I think
20 needs to be analyzed because with the use of
21 centralized columns and transferred trusses, you --
22 it's possible to envision an addition that would
23 rather float above it with an interstitial floor for
24 mechanical, electrical.

25 I don't know that that's been explored,

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1 but in my mind in a three-dimensional world, you
2 mentioned east, west, north and south, but up and
3 down -- I would surrender on down. I know where the
4 water table is and so do you. But realistically a
5 vertical element there I do not think would be
6 disruptive, and what would it do? We do a lot of work
7 in forest protection, airports, this kind of thing,
8 military installations, control of entrances and exits
9 is paramount to have as few as possible is the best
10 and you are fortunate that to the north you've got a
11 pot of land that's yet undeveloped. I mean, it could
12 be whatever you want it to be within reason. You
13 don't have to load up mail trucks and things there
14 anymore.

15 But I think the point I make is that with
16 a vertical expression, the functionality would be
17 extremely unified. Everybody would be there. The
18 cost of disruption would need to be considered, but in
19 any case you would want to drop back from the facade
20 20 feet or so, give or take, and you might have a
21 pattern which, again, with transferred trusses would
22 limit the number of penetrations in the building. You
23 might be able to use the building during the
24 renovation. There have been many buildings that size
25 that have undergone serious renovation and still been

1 held together.

2 My point is not to do it or not do it,
3 emphasizing the point that I think it's important to
4 this community that have the courthouse and to have it
5 Downtown. My only appeal is that you add to your
6 directional points of expansion the vertical and do it
7 seriously and count the cost, count the cost fairly
8 against each alternative. If it goes south, it's
9 pretty apparent what the cost is, not to mention the
10 families disrupted and the people having dinner and
11 lunch and the energy it gives to the northern end of
12 the city. That will speak for itself, but there's a
13 number that need be attached to it, but in doing that
14 to see if the pieces can't be put together in a way
15 that would make it feasible to do an orderly expansion
16 in the vertical direction.

17 That's it. You know, I'm an architect by
18 profession and Neese Vanderoe said after a period of
19 time architects began to look like their buildings.
20 Isn't that something for all you architects to be
21 thinking about?

22 MS. GLYNN: I have three other folks
23 signed up to speak, Mr. Greg Bolch, Rob Mandle and
24 Alice Allen-Grimes. If anybody else would like to
25 sign up at this time, that would be great. Mr. Greg

1 Bolch.

2 MR. BOLCH: I'm Greg Bolch. I live at
3 Lofts at 500. First of all, I would like to say I
4 appreciate the GSA looking at the East Site. At the
5 previous meeting, that wasn't something that was
6 looked at and I brought that up, and I appreciate you
7 guys having a slide for that. The gentleman in the
8 back, I forgot your name, but at the last meeting you
9 went through the advantages and disadvantages of each
10 of the sites, north, west and south, that was pretty
11 beneficial, but that wasn't done for the East Site
12 because you-all didn't have that at that time. But I
13 see that now that it is in the plan it looks to me
14 like it's a viable option so I would appreciate it if
15 one of you guys could go through the advantages and
16 disadvantages of that and compare that to the south,
17 the advantages and disadvantages.

18 In addition to that, I would like to
19 point out, I was looking on the Internet and there is
20 a precedent for having courthouses divided when they
21 have to be. For instance, the LA courthouse, that's
22 one that I ran across in my research. Also punch in
23 Google 500-year floodplain and courthouse, I came up
24 with an NEPA case study, a hypothetical case study for
25 a courthouse expansion in a 500-year floodplain and

1 how that can be accomplished. Unfortunately I didn't
2 bring that with me tonight, but I do have the link and
3 I'll forward it to the e-mail address that you guys
4 have provided so you can look at that.

5 Just the last thing as far as going
6 vertical, the 500 Granby building, in fact, was built
7 with three floors in 1914. Then in the '30s I believe
8 floors four and five were added on. So I think in the
9 '30s if they could figure out how to add onto a
10 building maybe they could somehow do it in 2006.

11 MR. MORRELL: I can assure you judges
12 were not in that building when they did it. That's
13 all I'll say there. On the East Site that is part of
14 the EA. The biggest disadvantage to the East Site is
15 obviously closing Monticello Avenue entirely. But
16 that is being studied in the EA. We do have traffic
17 patterns being studied on any sites that affect
18 traffic. So I can't say it's a viable solution until
19 I see the traffic study.

20 MR. BOLCH: What about operationally?

21 MR. MORRELL: Operationally it looks
22 great. I like it. Rob, do you like it? I'm putting
23 Rob on the spot. Rob is our ARA, assistant regional
24 administrator, Region 3. You don't have to speak on
25 it. East Site is functionally -- does functionally

1 work well. The biggest detriment is closing a
2 six-lane road entirely. We don't know what effects
3 that would have on the city but we are studying that.
4 Precedent, LA, I'm not sure. The only thing I know
5 about LA is they are building a big courthouse out
6 there. Are they splitting functions? I thought it
7 was a brand new courthouse to house the entire
8 district and bankruptcy.

9 MR. HEWELL: That project -- I don't know
10 the numbers but in a general scope I believe that the
11 estimate for the project wasn't \$1 million. It was
12 somewhere between \$5- and \$600 million.

13 MR. MORRELL: I'm interested in the NEPA
14 case study. I haven't seen that.

15 MS. GLYNN: Mr. Rob Mandle, and I only
16 have one other additional speaker.

17 MR. MANDLE: My name is Rob Mandle. I'm
18 a Norfolk resident. I'll pick up where we left off
19 earlier. What I wanted to do was -- let me put it
20 into context really. I was at the last meeting and
21 the first thing I did when I got home was Google the
22 Executive Order and I read the whole thing. It's
23 really only three pages. So this seven- or eight-page
24 thing, it was a lot easier to read in the Executive
25 Order personally, but one thing I found, and I was

1 kicking myself because I left a printout on my office
2 desk of the Executive Order, so I'm saying this from
3 memory but I was glossing over the glossary and
4 definitions. In the Executive Order they do not refer
5 to a 500-year floodplain at all. It's in here but I
6 suspect that, and you guys can correct me if I'm wrong
7 or if you guys aren't sure, but what I suspect is the
8 problem here is the Executive Order also directs all
9 Federal agencies to come up with their policy relative
10 to the Executive Order. So the way I understood it
11 and the way it's defined in Jimmy Carter's writing --
12 remember it goes back that far -- a 100-year
13 floodplain is defined as the one percent in a given
14 year. The fact that GSA has gone to the 500-year
15 floodplain is on their own accord, not Jimmy Carter's.
16 And you guys can correct me if I was wrong about that.
17 I think that's a sticking point that's been bothering
18 me because it's been continued to be applied as a
19 reason not to pursue the North Site. That was the
20 number one reason they gave at the last meeting. I
21 know myself and a number of other people challenged
22 that without even knowing about the Executive Order
23 issue.

24 The other thing I wanted to comment on,
25 and it's been touched upon here and I think it needs

1 reiteration, is the West Site was at one point the
2 preferred alternative. Now you could say that
3 September 11th changed that but only -- that was my
4 excuse but only say 30 minutes ago it was stated that
5 the West Site continued to be the preferred site until
6 the city came with its proposal on Monticello. So
7 that became another sticking point for me was if the
8 West Site was a preferred alternative at one point,
9 even in the face of security concerns, you've got two
10 access points, all of the same issues you might have
11 on the North Site, the only difference being -- well,
12 two differences -- one being the main entrance of the
13 courthouse is not facing this new site, the North
14 Site, and, two, Brambleton is wider.

15 How do you address those two things?

16 It's not really that difficult. I work for an
17 architectural firm. We can do those kinds of things.
18 It's not too hard, the other architects in here as
19 well. That's another issue, that only architects and
20 engineers will really be able to speak to how to solve
21 those problems in challenging ways. That's an
22 architect's job, to come up with those ideas. That
23 first thing is important and the second thing is the
24 issue of Brambleton being too long. Well, you guys
25 were going to build a tunnel under Granby Street, yes,

1 Brambleton is longer but what's the appraised value of
2 the Showcase building right now? \$20 million,
3 something around there, could you build it at a net
4 increment at \$20 million? I think you probably could.
5 I'm not a tunnel builder, though.

6 But that other point -- I think I touched
7 that. The last thing I want to say is I really was
8 intrigued by the East Site as well. I understand that
9 traffic issue is going to be a problem, but the light
10 rail thing you could also push the light rail down
11 St. Paul. I don't know. You might want to talk to
12 the light rail planners to get them in here. Thank
13 you. Any of you guys can address some of those
14 things.

15 MR. MORRELL: The first question, you had
16 talked about the Executive Order versus the GSA order,
17 what you were saying is correct. GSA order states we
18 shouldn't build in a 500-year floodplain if it is a
19 critical action. The courthouse is a critical action.

20 MR. BOLCH: So it's not a Federal --

21 MR. MORRELL: The Federal Executive Order
22 doesn't address that issue. They do defer. It does
23 in the Executive Order talk about the 100-year
24 floodplain. So you are correct on that. It also
25 talks in the Executive Order that we are not supposed

1 to promote any other building in the floodplains.
2 That's one of the primary reasons we would lean
3 against building in floodplains. Maybe the Federal
4 Government can take care of themselves and we have the
5 taxpayers' money to mitigate any flood risks but other
6 businesses may not have that money, and we are
7 promoting the building around that area and developing
8 in the floodplain.

9 MR. BOLCH: Are you talking about in the
10 500?

11 MR. MORRELL: In any floodplain.

12 MR. BOLCH: The Federal or the GSA order
13 says that?

14 MR. MORRELL: The Executive Order says we
15 should not.

16 MR. BOLCH: It doesn't, though. It's
17 that the floodplain is defined in the glossary as a
18 100-year floodplain, one percent chance.

19 MR. MORRELL: But it says we shouldn't
20 promote building in a floodplain.

21 MR. BOLCH: In the 100-year. That's what
22 I was trying to drive at.

23 MR. MORRELL: Part of the north property
24 is in the 100.

25 MR. BOLCH: That corner.

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1 MR. MORRELL: Any part of the property in
2 a 100-year floodplain is considered in the 100-year
3 floodplain. If you want to split hairs --

4 MR. BOLCH: I'm not splitting hairs.

5 MR. MORRELL: If you look at the
6 floodplain, we are in the 100-year floodplain. We
7 are. The northeast corner of our site would be in the
8 100-year floodplain.

9 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: Wouldn't that be
10 setback property?

11 MR. MORRELL: It doesn't matter. It's
12 part of our property. The next issue was the West
13 Site was preferred before the South Site, the only
14 reason we considered the West Site as a preference,
15 the original South Site we could not get a 50-foot
16 setback. That was the only reason we were off of the
17 South Site.

18 MR. BOLCH: But my point being you were
19 willing to cross the street and do all the operational
20 issues.

21 MR. MORRELL: It wasn't the most optimum
22 solution for --

23 MR. BOLCH: But you were willing to.

24 MR. MORRELL: But we were willing to
25 because we had no other alternative. The South Site

1 we couldn't build on. When the city made the proposal
2 and said we'll make your site larger, that was the
3 perfect site.

4 MR. BOLCH: Then that begs the question
5 with what's wrong with the North Site other than a
6 two-foot 100-year floodplain?

7 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: If the city takes away
8 the South Site you will have to go north.

9 MS. GLYNN: If we can we have one more
10 person that hasn't spoken yet.

11 MR. BOLCH: Everybody else had an
12 opportunity to have a dialogue. I would like my
13 opportunity to have a dialogue.

14 MR. MORRELL: I'll be at Baxter's at
15 9:00.

16 MS. GLYNN: One of the things I keep
17 hearing repeatedly, though, why not the north, why the
18 south, those things will be addressed in the
19 Environmental Assessment and in the findings of no
20 significant impact. The decision has not been made.
21 So to say why not the north is not -- GSA can't say
22 not the north at this point. They can say it is not
23 preferred but they have not made that decision. If I
24 can, Alice Allen-Grimes, and then we did have three
25 people sign up to speak, Ben Bines, Blount Hunter and

1 Chris Malendoski.

2 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: I did also but she
3 told me not to sign up.

4 MS. GLYNN: I'll add you to the list.

5 MS. ALLEN-GRIMES: My name is Alice
6 Allen-Grimes. I'm a resident of Norfolk and a board
7 member of the Norfolk Preservation Alliance. I fully
8 support the planning process for expanding the
9 existing Hoffman Courthouse. The Federal courthouse
10 is an important component of Downtown Norfolk because
11 of the activity it generates and because the building
12 itself is an impressive historic structure that adds
13 much to Downtown's structure. It's critical that the
14 historic architecture of the courthouse and
15 surrounding buildings be a prime consideration in the
16 design of the expansion.

17 That does not mean that alteration of the
18 building is unacceptable. Adding to the interior
19 courtyard or any of the sides of the building other
20 than the front are reasonable options to consider in
21 planning the expansion, providing that such additions
22 are respectful of the building's history and
23 architecture, I do not believe that citizens concerned
24 about historic issues would be opposed, especially
25 considering that the loss or degradation of other

1 historic buildings could be the outcome if the Hoffman
2 building is not modified in some way.

3 Perhaps the construction of stairs and
4 elevators in the courtyard could provide a way of
5 separating the movements of judges from others.
6 Perhaps the construction of parking garages on the
7 immediate north side in the current parking lot, with
8 multiple stories above it, could provide the needed
9 square footage and provide the needed setback for
10 traffic vertically, if not horizontally. Maybe the
11 basement could be renovated to provide space for
12 meeting rooms or holding areas even if they don't have
13 windows.

14 It seems to everyone that the Bankruptcy
15 Court activities do not need to be in the Federal
16 courthouse. They could be moved to the North Site
17 across Brambleton or to some other site. Closing of
18 streets should be minimized, but perhaps the number of
19 lanes could be reduced on Bute Street or Monticello
20 Avenue or even Brambleton Avenue for that matter, if
21 it allows the space you need while working in
22 limitations. I ask that every option be evaluated
23 that would allow for use of the existing space on the
24 courthouse property and adjacent streets for Federal
25 Court activities.

1 It's understood that there are security
2 and safety requirements, but are they written in
3 stone? And that's a rhetorical question. I don't
4 expect a response this evening. In projects
5 constructed by government, for major highways to new
6 buildings to renovations, standards and so-called
7 requirements are routinely waived. I suspect there is
8 leeway in the 50-foot setback requirement for this
9 project as well, especially considering you have a
10 pre-existing structure that clearly will not be 50
11 feet from traffic on all sides on any of the options
12 that have been studied thus far.

13 I'm asking the GSA to form a Citizen
14 Advisory Committee to participate in the continuation
15 of the study. Clearly there are many interesting
16 parties, and your project will affect the lives and
17 livelihood of many people. Obviously the GSA will be
18 the decision-maker, and not the citizen committee, but
19 surely bringing in citizens who are informed about
20 Downtown issues and historic preservation can only
21 improve the ultimate outcome and in the process public
22 support for the decision will be gained.

23 MS. GLYNN: Mr. Ben Bines.

24 MR. BINES: I just have a few follow-up
25 questions I've gotten from listening to what's going

1 on this evening. First of all, to me it sounds
2 like -- and I'm not an expert on it yet, but it sounds
3 like we're picking and choosing which Executive Orders
4 and which GSA orders to follow and which not to follow
5 and we are ranking them on not an objective viewpoint
6 but some sort of a biased viewpoint. So far I've
7 heard historic, floodplain, condemnation orders, other
8 building restrictions, security, all these things.
9 Each one has an order specifically detailing what you
10 guys have to do, but nothing has been said this order
11 supercedes that, that order supersedes that, and I
12 would be very hard pressed to believe that any of
13 those orders would supercede condemning somebody's
14 home. I really believe based on other condemnation
15 cases going all the way up to the Supreme Court that
16 that is supposed to be and was implemented as a last
17 resort if there was nothing else that could be done,
18 and today we've heard a number of things that could be
19 done. Regardless of whether they are slightly more
20 expensive or slightly less expensive, you just don't
21 take people's homes flat out unless you absolutely
22 have to.

23 Closing Monticello, you say may be less
24 desirable than kicking people from their homes. How
25 could rerouting traffic, how could that possibly be

1 less desirable than removing people from houses? That
2 just -- as a human being you can't tell me that that
3 is less desirable or more desirable than building an
4 offshoot from a road, putting a tunnel, whatever it
5 may be, the cost, what it may be, bottom line is, what
6 I want to know is why are we paying for your guys'
7 mistakes? I've heard time and time again this project
8 has been on the books for ten years plus. These
9 buildings didn't exist ten years ago. You sat on it,
10 and I'm sorry about that and you are faced with a
11 difficult decision, but that wasn't us. It's not
12 right for you to transfer the blame and the
13 consequences to those people who are trying to make
14 Downtown a better place because somewhere along the
15 lines some miscommunication or whatever it may have
16 been caused you to drop the ball.

17 I personally, to address the issue of
18 security, I have a sister who works for the New York
19 City District Attorney's Office. She puts very hard
20 criminals away every single day. She looks at them in
21 the face, eye to eye. They are sitting there and some
22 of them go free after having sat there for two and a
23 half hours staring at her. She lives in Brooklyn.
24 You are telling me that there are five judges who
25 can't somehow figure out a way to keep safe with

1 probably slightly less hardened criminals at least in
2 numbers than New York City, at least in numbers,
3 ma'am. Maybe there is just as violent crime but there
4 aren't as many as in New York City. You are telling
5 me that they can't figure out a way to provide
6 security for those judges that also, again, doesn't
7 involve kicking people out of their homes.

8 On that same concept, you talk about the
9 need for multiple security, well, you build an annex,
10 build a bridge, close the whole thing and don't put
11 any doors or windows, no need for new security.
12 There's only one way to get in and out. There still
13 could only be one way to get in and one way to get
14 out. You don't need all that stuff. It's nice but
15 you don't need it.

16 Again, as a last alternative, you go back
17 and say there's no way we can build a building like
18 that, we have to take your homes because we need to
19 provide security for more people than just you, okay.
20 I don't see how that's not an option, enclose. You
21 don't need any more security. Everybody goes through
22 the same door they are going through right now.

23 I would like to also know how many of the
24 contractors and architects have you actually talked to
25 because a number of them say they could foresee ways

1 that might be more cost effective than what you guys
2 have come up with so far. We're all familiar with how
3 the government works. It's the least efficient entity
4 in the United States and pretty much over the world.
5 So the fact for you guys to come up with something
6 that says will be \$450 a square foot going up, west,
7 east, whatever, I don't believe that for a second if
8 you put that to a commercial firm. I think there are
9 a number of commercial firms that could come up with
10 proposals that would be viable, that would meet the
11 demands that don't involve the cost of you guys
12 looking at thousands of pieces of paper and your
13 salaries involved with it and whatever you add on to
14 the cost of doing one of these projects that isn't cut
15 and dry, cement and whatever goes in to building a
16 building. Really that's it for me.

17 MS. GLYNN: Next person, Mr. Blount
18 Hunter.

19 MR. HUNTER: I am going to form my
20 comments as a question or two. Could I please see the
21 hands of all the people who are employed by the GSA or
22 are consultants to the GSA who are here tonight? One,
23 two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.
24 Of those ten people I would like a yes or no answer,
25 are any of you aware of a November, 2001 Environmental

1 Assessment prepared by the GSA on the Hoffman

2 Courthouse expansion? Yes or no?

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Yes.

4 MR. HUNTER: Are you aware of the

5 conclusions of the statements of that 2001

6 Environmental Assessment with respect to the historic

7 resources?

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Yes.

9 MR. HUNTER: How many yeses? I would

10 like to read them -- read the basic conclusions into

11 the record. "Selection of either the southern annex

12 site or the western annex site for the proposed U.S.

13 Post Office and courthouse expansion would result in

14 adverse affects to architectural resources within

15 national register listed Downtown Norfolk historic

16 district as expanded May, 2001." The northern annex

17 site is not in this district.

18 MS. GLYNN: We have two more, Mr. Chris

19 Malendoski and Baxter Simmons, Sr.

20 MR. MALENDOSKI: I have copies of what I

21 proposed earlier based on what Mr. Bolch had

22 originally suggested about eastward expansion. It's

23 very simple. It's not hard. Anybody that knows that

24 block of Monticello Avenue knows, yes, it can get

25 crowded when the circus is in town, which is about

1 once a year. That's about it. So -- and we can come
2 up with creative ways to redirect traffic especially
3 if we are graduating to a more mature mind-set in
4 transportation, such as Portland, Oregon, i.e., light
5 rail. So it's not all about the car anymore and it's
6 not all about security for a few people. It's about
7 the citizens of this city, this Commonwealth of this
8 nation for whom this nation exists to serve, and not
9 vice versa. So I just wanted to mention and remind
10 everybody that this whole process -- and if I could
11 quote our Mayor a little while ago as saying -- his
12 quote was, This is just flat wrong. Now, he's right.
13 The way we're doing this, the approach here, has been
14 wrong. Hopefully all options will be explored and,
15 again, you see my fighting gloves coming off right
16 now, but I want to remain positive. I want to remain
17 optimistic and I want to come up with a creative
18 solution that keeps the courthouse and Downtown and
19 provides for a secure facility but also preserves the
20 residents that have worked so hard and love living
21 Downtown as well and for the future residential
22 properties that are coming on line as well.

23 I might just finish and conclude by
24 saying not just search your hearts but search your
25 minds for creative alternatives. It is obvious that

1 every alternative has not been looked at. You guys
2 owe this to us. As public servants you owe this to
3 the American people. Thank you.

4 MS. GLYNN: Mr. Simmons.

5 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: This will be very
6 short and hopefully I can give you an idea that will
7 put all this to bed. First thing, just to make a
8 couple of quick comments, the Executive Order is just
9 as that gentleman said and you agree with, John, and
10 what I'm saying, it seems to me that the GSA policies,
11 and this happens in government as you know in any
12 phase of it, exceeds the dictations of the Executive
13 Order when it goes to 500-year floodplain. I
14 personally think, and please don't take offense to
15 this, I think that's illegal, and I think it would
16 lose a test in court but it shouldn't have to go
17 there.

18 Secondly, assuming that the Executive
19 Order, which it does say if you do certain things you
20 can build in a floodplain, assuming that you can do
21 that, every time the North Site is mentioned or a new
22 building is mentioned, a new courthouse, it's never
23 mentioned to go on the North Site. I feel the threat
24 of Virginia Beach. That's what I hear when I hear
25 that it will go somewhere else.

1 But my point is this: If you found that
2 building a new courthouse or as they say sectionalize
3 it and put it on the North Site and it meets or can be
4 done within the floodplain direction of the Executive
5 Order, why do you-all reject considering that, making
6 that assumption that the Executive Order is correct?

7 Now, having said that, let's go to the
8 east for just a moment. I know I'm in a different --
9 yeah, the east. You made the comment and I thought I
10 heard some pretty strong agreement that you liked the
11 idea of closing Monticello if the traffic conditions
12 work. Unless I missed something, you-all don't have
13 anything to do with the traffic conditions as long as
14 you have the security. So what I'm hearing is if the
15 City Council says we have no problem closing
16 Monticello and redirecting our traffic and so forth,
17 then you-all don't even need to carry this thing any
18 further. You can just decide on the East Site and be
19 done with it, am I correct, because you do not have
20 the direction to decide the traffic conditions for the
21 City of Norfolk? That's all I'm saying. You like
22 that idea, so I want to leave with a positive note, go
23 get them on the East Site.

24 MS. GLYNN: Thank you. We don't have
25 anyone else signed up to speak so I would like to

1 thank you for coming out tonight. We've gotten a lot
2 of great questions, a lot of great comments that we do
3 have a complete record of them. We will be obtaining
4 that transcript and going through it and using that
5 information as we move forward in preparing the
6 Environmental Assessment. That will be available in
7 about March and we will be sending out notices when
8 that is available. Thank you for coming tonight.

9 (The proceedings were concluded at this
10 time.)

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1 COURT REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

2

3 I, Shell Riddle, a Registered

4 Professional Reporter, certify that I recorded

5 verbatim by stenotype the proceedings in the captioned

6 cause, Norfolk, Virginia, on January 10, 2005.

7 I further certify that to the best of my

8 knowledge and belief, the foregoing transcript

9 constitutes a true and correct transcript of the said

10 proceedings.

11 Given under my hand this _____ day

12 of _____, 2006, at Norfolk, Virginia.

13

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15 Shell Riddle, Notary Public

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1 SECTION 106 PUBLIC HEARING

2

3 WALTER E. HOFFMAN UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

4 Norfolk, Virginia

5 November 14, 2005

6

7 Appearances: Rob Hewell, Assistant Regional

8 Administrator, GSA

9 John A. Morrell, Project Manager, GSA

10 Tim Hile, Property Manager, GSA

11 Graham Davidson, Hartman-Cox

12 Architects

13 Joanna Rosato, Project Executive, GSA

14 Gina Gilliam, Public Affairs Officer,

15 GSA

16 Also Present: Ted Christian, III, Confidential

17 Assistant, GSA

18 Leann Jost, GSA

19 Bernard Minakowski, GSA

20 Paul Andrade, GSA

21

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1 MS. ROSATO: Good morning. Welcome to
2 this public consultation meeting in accordance with
3 Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act. My
4 name is Joanna Rosato. I'm from GSA in
5 Philadelphia. I'm the project executive for the
6 Courthouse Annex Project.

7 Before I get into introductions, I'd
8 like to let you know that this meeting was posted --
9 the public notice of this meeting was posted in the
10 legal section of The Virginian-Pilot on November
11 1st, and it ran for five consecutive days. In
12 addition to the posting, concerned members of the
13 historic preservation community were invited to the
14 meeting. Among those invited were the Norfolk
15 Preservation Alliance, the Downtown Norfolk Council,
16 the Virginia State Historic Preservation office, the
17 Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the
18 City of Norfolk.

19 To my right here is John Morrell, who
20 is the project manager for the Courthouse Annex
21 Project; Graham Davidson, the architect from
22 Hartman-Cox, who's been working with us on the
23 planning for the building; Tim Hile, who is the
24 building manager here for the Hoffman Courthouse;
25 and Rob Hewell, assistant regional administrator for

1 the Public Building Service for the Mid-Atlantic
2 Region. Rob will be presenting today.

3 The purpose of this meeting is to
4 obtain public comment and input regarding Section
5 106 of the Historic Preservation Act and the impact
6 of the annex on the historic properties as it
7 relates to the Hoffman Courthouse Annex. Rob's
8 presentation today is going to talk a little bit
9 about our experience in GSA, our project objectives
10 and the project history and our experience
11 specifically as it relates to historic
12 preservation.

13 We will take questions after the
14 presentation. The presentation lasts about an
15 hour. We expect to have a question-and-comment
16 period for about an hour after the presentation. We
17 ask that your questions and comments be related to
18 historic preservation issues, and we would like --
19 at the end of the presentation, we'll give some
20 instructions as to how you should come up and ask
21 your questions or state your comments.

22 Rob.

23 MR. HEWELL: Thank you, Joanna.

24 Hi. Good morning to everyone. Before
25 we get into discussing the specifics of the Hoffman

1 Courthouse and the various issues surrounding the
2 construction of the annex for it, we thought it
3 would be of some interest to those of you in the
4 audience who have a background with historic
5 preservation to see some other projects that we've
6 done that involve attaching annexes to existing
7 historic buildings.

8 In the Mid-Atlantic Region of the
9 General Services Administration, we have a -- I
10 guess you could say we have a bias toward reusing
11 the existing historic structures rather than
12 abandoning them and building entirely new
13 structures. So --

14 A VOICE FROM THE AUDIENCE: Excuse me,
15 sir. Can you turn your mike up? We can't hear.

16 MR. HEWELL: Okay, I apologize. I'll
17 just try and get closer to the microphone. I'll
18 just lean over. And, please, if I get to be hard to
19 hear again, please let me know again. That's sort
20 of the story of my life. I don't talk too loud.

21 A VOICE FROM THE AUDIENCE: I don't
22 think the mike is on.

23 MR. HEWELL: Yeah, it's on. You can't
24 hear?

25 MS. ROSATO: I'll let you hold this.

1 MR. HEWELL: Okay, I'll just hold it
2 closer to my mouth. Is that better? Good. Do I
3 need to repeat anything I said? Okay.

4 I'll start at the beginning, I guess.
5 Before we get into discussing the specifics of the
6 Hoffman Courthouse project, we thought that it would
7 be of some interest to those of you with a historic
8 preservation background to see some pictures of some
9 other projects that we've done in the Mid-Atlantic
10 Region of the General Services Administration that
11 involve attaching new annexes to historic courthouse
12 buildings.

13 The entire region -- there are 11
14 regions of GSA, and our region has a sort of a bias
15 toward retaining our historic landmark buildings and
16 adding to them as necessary as opposed to abandoning
17 them and building entirely new courthouses, although
18 that is sometimes necessary as well. These go more
19 or less chronologically.

20 Oh, I'm sorry. We have a slide that
21 tells you about us. If you've never heard of us
22 before, we're a bureau of the General Services
23 Administration called the Public Building Service.
24 We have what may well be the largest inventory of
25 space held by a single entity in the world. We

1 have -- we occupy 357,000,000 square feet in 8900
2 buildings and properties, we manage 414 historic
3 buildings, including three that have the -- that are
4 classified as national historic landmarks. We house
5 well over a million federal employees in both owned
6 and leased space and we have a presence in 2100
7 communities. There are actually federally-owned
8 federal buildings in 500 cities.

9 The first project we thought we'd show
10 you is the Fisher Federal Building and Courthouse in
11 Trenton, New Jersey. This is a picture of the
12 original building constructed in 1933. In the '90s,
13 we added an annex to it that you can see in the left
14 picture behind to the left of the original building
15 and the lower right picture that's actually a
16 rendering of the back side of the building with the
17 new annex.

18 You can see that the original building
19 was well worth keeping. This is part of the
20 interior of the new part of the building. On the
21 left is a stairwell and on the right is the top of
22 the torch, which is -- let me see if I can go back.
23 I don't know if it will take me back.

24 Anyway, there is a glass stair on the
25 back of the building in the new annex that the

1 architect did in the style of the torch of the
2 Statue of Liberty, and this is the top of it.

3 Do we have any idea what the problem
4 is?

5 AUDIOVISUAL PERSON: No, that's what
6 we're trying to --

7 MR. HEWELL: Okay. We will try to
8 solve that, but I'll keep talking.

9 This is the courthouse building in
10 Scranton. The picture on the left shows the -- part
11 of the original building to the right of the
12 picture, or centered in the picture was a large
13 apartment building that was next to our building
14 facing the county courthouse across the street.

15 That building we acquired and
16 demolished and built -- this is going to be a
17 problem. The bottom picture on the right shows
18 you -- oh, good. The original building is to the
19 right, the annex is to the left. They're connected
20 by a glass atrium, and, hopefully, if this works,
21 the next picture will show you a picture -- or next
22 slide will show you a picture of the atrium. That's
23 interesting. As usual, these things were working
24 just fine before we started.

25 The picture on the right is the atrium

1 connecting the two buildings, the original building
2 to the right and the new building to the left. The
3 picture on the lower left is one of the new
4 courtrooms, and the picture on the further left
5 shows the atrium from the street.

6 This is a building in Wilkes-Barre,
7 Pennsylvania. It's not actually a courthouse. It
8 is now an office building. The original building
9 was the administration building of the Stegmaier
10 Brewery, and it was a whole complex of buildings on
11 this block. The Stegmaier Brewery went out of
12 business and sat empty for well over 30 years. It
13 had almost become a symbol in Wilkes-Barre of the
14 failure of the city to sort of regain financially
15 the status that it had. There were several attempts
16 to reuse the building. It ended up on the National
17 Historic Trust's list of the ten most endangered
18 buildings in the country, the ten most endangered
19 historic buildings in the country.

20 Through a rather unusual partnership
21 with the Postal Service and the city and the
22 developer, we ended up being able to reuse that
23 building and attach an annex to it. And the project
24 itself is a preservation that we're very proud of.

25 The picture on the left here is the new

1 lobby of the public complex. It's actually in the
2 old building. The addition is to the left and the
3 original building is to the right. And the picture
4 on the right is the offices that are in the cupola
5 or the top floor of the tower of the building.
6 Those are actually the offices of Congressman Ken
7 Jorski, who was a big supporter of the project. And
8 because the cupola was so perpetually interesting,
9 we actually designed it with a glass ceiling so that
10 you could look up and see.

11 The Erie Courthouse, which was only
12 just recently finished, is probably the most unusual
13 of all of these, because in the end it involved a
14 collection of five buildings. On the top slide, you
15 see our building, the original courthouse, built in
16 the '30s on the right. It's located next to what at
17 one time was the Erie County Community Library. And
18 it's a beautiful Georgian building that at the time
19 we started looking at this was vacant.

20 The picture on the bottom shows the
21 back side. To the upper right you see the library,
22 to the top you see our building, the annex that had
23 been previously added to it, and then in the front
24 here you see the vacant and abandoned Baker
25 Department Store, a clothing store, which was one of

1 the few examples in Erie of somewhere between -- I
2 don't know if it was art deco or art nouveau. If
3 there's anybody here who can answer that question
4 for me, I'd actually appreciate it. But there was
5 quite a bit of interest in the community in hanging
6 onto that.

7 What we ended up with, by adding both
8 another annex and a connecting atrium that connected
9 the other four buildings, is what you see here. The
10 spaces inside are spectacular. We reused the art
11 deco building as a retail office for the Postal
12 Service. The library is actually where the
13 Bankruptcy Courts are now. And you can see here on
14 the right-hand side what the inside of that building
15 looked like. We restored it, we think, to the
16 original colors and treatments. And on the left you
17 see the atrium, the new atrium that we put in
18 connecting all the parts of the building.

19 The next building up is Wheeling, West
20 Virginia. This one was just opened this year. And
21 the top building shows you -- top picture shows you
22 the original building. You can see probably they
23 added an addition on the right-hand side at some
24 point, I think it was in the '40s. The rest of the
25 block was occupied by a variety of buildings, which

1 in the end we were forced to take down in order to
2 put the annex on.

3 The new building here on the bottom
4 slide is on the left-hand side, and it's connected
5 also using a glass atrium. The left picture here,
6 you see the inside of the atrium, and you're looking
7 at the original exterior wall of the old building.
8 And on the right-hand side, you're on the upper
9 level of the sort of catwalk that connects the two
10 buildings at the second floor.

11 This is the last building, and this one
12 was also just completed this year. We were trying
13 to create a courthouse in Lynchburg, Virginia. And
14 in the end, we began using sort of an interesting
15 partnership of the different groups, including the
16 Postal Service again. We were able to acquire an
17 old 1912 schoolhouse, which you see on the left-hand
18 side. And in the end, we used that as the entrance
19 to the new courthouse building, which you see
20 attached to the left-hand side. The majority of the
21 spaces are in the annex, but the interior of the
22 original building is now the entrance lobby of the
23 building. And on the right-hand side, you see the
24 Bankruptcy Court, which is on the second floor.

25 So having taken that little diversion,

1 let's talk a little bit about what we're here for
2 today. This project and most of the other ones that
3 you saw on the preceding slides are all part of an
4 overall program to modernize, update and expand the
5 court system of the United States Federal Court
6 System. This goes back quite a few years now.
7 There are people here who could correct me if I'm
8 wrong, but for the sake of argument, let's say 20
9 years.

10 We used to -- working in the courts,
11 GSA used to propose courthouse projects under
12 renovations for new courthouses. In a kind of
13 case-by-case manner, we would develop the need for
14 the biggest projects, submit them, and both the
15 office managing the budget and Congress, who have to
16 approve our projects, finally got tired of seeing
17 the court need expressed project by project. And
18 they kind of dug their heels in and said to the
19 administrative office of the courts, Look, we don't
20 want to see any more individual project proposals
21 until we understood how they fit into the overall
22 priority of all of the projects that you have a need
23 for around the country.

24 And the result of that was that the
25 administrative office went out and developed a

1 planning system for gauging the need, the timing,
2 the priority of court construction and the court
3 addition projects and developed a priority listing
4 and developed what's called a five-year plan. And
5 for the last several years, we don't propose a
6 project to Congress unless it's on the court's
7 five-year plan.

8 What goes into establishing those
9 priorities, among other things, is the year the
10 existing building is out of space, various security
11 concerns, which are changing constantly, operational
12 concerns and the number of judges that are
13 impacted. If you have more questions about that
14 planning system, we can probably deal with them in
15 the question-and-answer period.

16 In this case, I guess you'd say it's
17 the City of Norfolk's turn. The priority need for
18 this project was identified in the 1990s and it has
19 evolved since then in several stumbling kinds of
20 steps, but the project objectives for this project
21 have remained pretty much the same since we started
22 looking at it. We want to satisfy the court's ten-
23 and 30-year expansion requirements and we want to
24 maintain a consolidated court presence in the
25 Hoffman Courthouse.

1 That involves, we hope, creating an
2 architecturally-unified court complex that optimizes
3 all of their concerns for security, circulation and
4 operation. And we'll talk a little bit more about
5 those.

6 I'm fond of saying about this project
7 it's a very complicated issue, but the basis of it
8 is actually very simple. Our project objectives are
9 to build an annex for the Hoffman Courthouse. And
10 without meaning to oversimplify it, the building has
11 four sides that we could possibly attach to or
12 relate to. And in the course of time, we have
13 looked at all four sides. And we'll be talking
14 about those in some detail. But from this picture,
15 I believe you can see that the -- if you're very
16 familiar with Downtown Norfolk, the south site, what
17 we refer to as the south site is across Bute Street
18 from the south side of the courthouse. And that
19 site contains the Landmark Building, which has
20 recently been converted into 24 condos and is about
21 to be -- I believe the Baxter's Sports Bar is just
22 about done.

23 That building was originally built in
24 1914 and modified in the late 1930s. The original
25 building facade was changed to, I believe, a

1 limestone facade, and by some reports, two floors
2 were added at that time. And the facade was changed
3 from its original style to what's now recognized as
4 the international style.

5 The west site, which is, of course, to
6 the west of the Hoffman building, would have been
7 comprised of a couple of parcels, including the
8 vacation of York Street or at least part of it. We
9 see that outlined in red there. We only -- when we
10 started investigating the west site, we also became
11 aware of the plans for a 31-story condominium tower
12 on that site, which had not come out.

13 The north site, which came up later,
14 you see outlined in red on the top of the slide, and
15 it is the current Greyhound bus station. And we did
16 find out as we were doing research on the site that
17 a portion of the site is contained in a floodplain.
18 We'll talk some more about that.

19 The east site is across the street from
20 the Scope, and the only way that we would be able to
21 expand across the east side is to pretty much close
22 Monticello Avenue, which is probably not practical
23 and, in any event, opposed by the city. So those --
24 that's just kind of a quick sketch of possible ways
25 of approaching this project.

1 Now, the history, for all intents and
2 purposes, this project started somewhere around
3 1997. We started investigating the potential for
4 doing an annex at that time, we did some feasibility
5 studies. And it's interesting to note, I guess,
6 that at that point in time, we didn't realize there
7 was a historic issue to deal with. The consultant
8 or one of the consultants that we used on the
9 project in the report that he did for us actually
10 referred to the Showcase Building as having been
11 built in the '50s, which it was not. That was an
12 error. And at that time, the block that's the site
13 that the Showcase Building sits on was not part of
14 the historic district. It has now been changed, and
15 that change took place -- I'm not entirely sure
16 exactly when but between 1997 and now.

17 The good thing about this site was that
18 with the closing of Bute Street, we were able to
19 contemplate actually attaching an annex to the
20 building, and that gave us a good solution to our
21 problem, because it facilitated the design of
22 circulation patterns and solved some other
23 operational problems. But it's very important that
24 we talk about the circulation patterns, because
25 you'll hear security mentioned several times today.

1 And to boil it down, security concerns of the
2 courthouses, there are actually two that have become
3 very, very strong design drivers. And one of those
4 was not as much of a driver in most of the projects
5 that we talked about and looked at the pictures of
6 earlier.

7 Those two are the need to separate
8 patterns of circulation within the courthouse. I
9 don't know whether you can see this real well from
10 the slide, so I may just kind of walk over and point
11 it out. But there are three very important
12 constituencies in the courthouse. One is, of
13 course, the courts, the judges and their staffs.
14 Two is the public coming to the building for a
15 variety of reasons, and three is the defendants in
16 cases that are held in the courthouse. It is very
17 important for both the safety of all three groups of
18 constituents and for the proper operation of the
19 court system to avoid -- I'm sorry, I don't have the
20 right legal words to describe -- to avoid people
21 hearing things that they shouldn't hear that are
22 intended to be -- I don't know the word right now.

23 MS. ROSATO: Confidential.

24 MR. HEWELL: Confidential, that's the
25 word. Those three circulation -- each of those

1 constituencies requires its own circulation pattern
2 separate from the other two. No courthouses built
3 before the 1990s satisfies that requirement, because
4 that requirement didn't used to be recognized as
5 being as important as it is today. And so in most
6 of the cases where we are doing courthouse
7 replacements or renovations, the biggest internal
8 problem that we have to face is how to separate the
9 three circulation patterns.

10 Is this going to reach?

11 In the existing Hoffman Courthouse --
12 and, again, if you can't see this, I apologize, but
13 I'm just going to use my finger -- the public
14 circulation on this particular floor of the
15 courthouse, the elevators and whatnot are here. The
16 public circulation goes down to this point, it goes
17 all the way around here to the back, and there are
18 some restrictions once you get to this point.

19 That circulation pattern is represented
20 on here by the sort of the crosshatched areas.
21 Where you see the red line, that's prisoner
22 circulation. Right now we don't have a clear form
23 of passage to get from the marshals' holding area to
24 the individual courtrooms without going through
25 public areas. In this case, it's pretty bad. We

1 actually have to traverse most of the floor to get
2 into the back entrance of the courtroom. That is a
3 tremendous security problem.

4 The third pattern of circulation is the
5 judicial circulation, judges and staff. That's
6 represented on here by the yellow highlighting. And
7 you can see that there are several areas in here
8 where at least two of the circulation patterns
9 cross, in other words, places where a judge can be
10 confronted by a defendant being moved to the
11 courtroom as he comes out of his office, or, even
12 worse, the defendant has to be moved through
13 public -- through the potential for public contact
14 before getting into the courtroom.

15 The addition of an annex on the south
16 side of the building, which is what we have looked
17 at, gives us the opportunity to create separate
18 patterns for all three, not only in the new part but
19 to correct those patterns in the existing building
20 by restricting the public -- the amount of public
21 contact with them and to separate the judicial
22 circulation and the prisoner circulation.

23 It's important to note that when we
24 originally looked at the south site, we were not
25 subject at that time to the second of the security

1 requirements that we are now faced with, which is
2 setback requirements on the outside of the
3 building. And that's -- I guess it's pretty obvious
4 why those setbacks are considered to be important.

5 But most of -- or I should say all of
6 the original courthouse buildings, the historic
7 courthouse buildings that we work with, don't have
8 those kind of setbacks. And so whenever we deal
9 with one of these projects, we are trying not only
10 to not build anything new that doesn't meet the
11 setback requirements but to do anything we can to
12 improve the glass security of the exterior of the
13 existing buildings.

14 When we first looked at the south side,
15 we came up with a plan that allowed a good
16 unification of both the new and the old. We were
17 assuming that we could take that annex pretty much
18 to the extremes of the original. But when we were
19 later faced with -- when we were later faced with
20 the setback issue, which kind of that requirement
21 kind of came in -- like many things, came in in the
22 course of the project, we were left with a much
23 smaller area for the footprint area for the building
24 if we were going to satisfy the 50-foot setback.
25 That size addition was actually quite impractical.

1 It allowed, at best, one courtroom per floor, which
2 is an extremely inefficient way to build a
3 courthouse, but it also, as you can see in the lower
4 right-hand side, required -- I guess you would call
5 it a high-rise tower immediately adjacent to the
6 historic building.

7 This was not a good solution for a lot
8 of reasons, but because it was the only direction
9 coming from the courthouse in which it was possible
10 to actually attach an annex, we continued to look at
11 it. We examined anything we could think of,
12 including adding a floor to the existing historic
13 building, which didn't do a whole lot for us but,
14 most importantly, was almost impossible from a
15 logistics standpoint. That would have disrupted the
16 courthouse so much that we would pretty much have to
17 vacate the entire existing courthouse and find
18 temporary space for the court operation, in which we
19 would be faced with all of the same problems with
20 respect to security, circulation and all that kind
21 of thing. And the expense of doing that, creating a
22 temporary space as well as the permanent space,
23 would actually have cost more than any other
24 option.

25 So after looking at everything we could

1 think of about how we could use the south site, at
2 that point, we decided to think about a different
3 kind of annex. And we went to the next logical
4 place, which was to the west site. And we did some
5 feasibility -- we looked at some feasibility issues
6 on the west site and ultimately determined that it
7 was possible on that site, because it was much
8 larger, to create an annex building that would not
9 have been architecturally -- excuse me,
10 operationally integrated, but we could accomplish a
11 very nice architectural enclave of the two buildings
12 with the two fronts of the buildings related to each
13 other across the pedestrian-friendly, two-lane
14 Granby Street. This was not considered to be as
15 good a solution as the south site, but at that
16 point, we thought it was the only real alternative
17 solution that we had.

18 We approached -- once we made that
19 decision, we approached both the city and the
20 developer of the Granby Tower, and you probably saw
21 the result of those meetings in the newspaper. It's
22 safe to say, I believe, that there were a number of
23 opponents to the use of the west site, not the least
24 of which was our friends in the city. And the city,
25 along with other people, suggested that instead of

1 threatening the development of that -- of the west
2 site, that we look to the north, which we did.

3 And the north site has -- it presents a
4 number of other problems. It's not a good -- it's
5 not a good solution to the desire to operationally
6 integrate the annex with the new building. We would
7 have to -- we would be across seven lanes of traffic
8 on a fairly busy street at extreme rush hours, and
9 there's really no way to operationally integrate the
10 two buildings. It might be possible to do a bridge,
11 it might be possible to do a tunnel, but we would
12 still have essentially two different buildings that
13 require two different security systems, two
14 different entry systems, and they would not operate
15 together.

16 More importantly, we discovered during
17 doing the investigation of the site that about half
18 of it is actually in a floodplain. And the federal
19 government is prohibited by Executive Order 11988
20 from both building or encouraging development in
21 floodplains unless there is no other practicable
22 solution. Given that and our other -- the other
23 hesitations that we have about the north site, we
24 kind of at least at that time ruled it out as a
25 plausible solution.

1 Our friends in the city then came to us
2 with a proposal that we hadn't considered because we
3 didn't think about changes to Monticello Avenue.
4 And what they asked us to look at, they said, If we
5 move Monticello Avenue to the east closer to the
6 Scope and closed two lanes, would that create enough
7 of a site for you to accomplish an annex on the
8 south side?

9 And when that was first proposed, I
10 have to tell you we weren't really sure it was going
11 to work. But we did investigate it, and it turns
12 out that it creates -- it makes the south site,
13 which was formerly right around in here, makes the
14 south site enough larger that we can now fit an
15 annex on it that would attach to the Hoffman
16 Courthouse and give us a good solution. It has the
17 added advantage of creating the necessary security
18 setback on the east side of the existing building as
19 well, so it has a lot of positives from our
20 standpoint. This particular option does give us --
21 does offer both operational and architectural
22 integration. It gives us both the security required
23 in a new building and enhances the security of the
24 existing building.

25 That's kind of where we are today. At

1 this point, we believe that the south site solution
2 is probably the only one that will give us the
3 successful annex to the Hoffman building. There
4 are, of course, other implications to that
5 observation, and I suspect many of you are here
6 today because of those concerns, primarily, those
7 people who have recently occupied condominiums in
8 the renovated Landmark Building.

9 And for those of you who are here for
10 that purpose, I just want to say we have -- we want
11 to hear what your concerns are, we want to answer
12 your questions, but that's not the purpose of
13 today's meeting. Today we're looking to satisfy the
14 requirements of Section 106, which is to talk about
15 the historic implications of our investigation. And
16 we would ask that if you have questions that are
17 unrelated to the historic process, please let us
18 know what they are. We have a variety of ways for
19 giving us comments, and there will be another
20 opportunity to meet publicly and talk about those
21 issues. We suspect the -- we believe we will
22 arrange that in January, but we will certainly make
23 it well-known.

24 So with that, I guess I would like to
25 open it up for comments and questions. The e-mail

1 address that you see on this slide is an e-mail
2 address at which you can send us any comments or
3 questions that you have, and we'll make sure that
4 they get answered. Today we're trying to answer as
5 many historic preservation issue questions as we
6 can.

7 MS. ROSATO: Okay. As Rob stated,
8 we're going to open up for questions and answers
9 and, hopefully, some comments from you on the
10 historic preservation issues. There are some ground
11 rules that we'd like you to follow. We're looking
12 for one question or comment per person. There are
13 many people in the courtroom. We want to give
14 everyone an opportunity to be heard.

15 We have a couple of ways for you to get
16 your comments and questions to us. If you're shy
17 and don't want to come up to the microphone, we have
18 comment forms for you that you can obtain on your
19 way out of the courtroom. There's also a web site
20 available here that you can send your comments and
21 questions to. We're prepared to answer all
22 questions and comments promptly, either through the
23 web site or through the public comment forum.

24 We have a court reporter here who's
25 recording today's proceedings for us. And in her

1 interest, we'd like you to come to the center here.
2 I'll hand you the microphone if you'd like to
3 speak. We ask you to state your name so that we can
4 get that for the record, and we can get started.

5 MS. GILLIAM: Hi. Any questions,
6 comments?

7 MR. PICKRELL: I'm James Pickrell. Has
8 anybody looked at the feasibility of going up or
9 going down?

10 MS. ROSATO: I'm sorry, sir. I
11 couldn't hear you.

12 MR. PICKRELL: Has the feasibility of
13 going up been eliminated?

14 MS. ROSATO: I understand the question
15 was, sir, did we look at going up above the existing
16 building?

17 MR. PICKRELL: Adding additional floors
18 to the existing building.

19 MS. ROSATO: Right, adding floors to
20 the existing building.

21 MR. MORRELL: We did look at adding
22 floors to the existing building, but because this
23 building is occupied, it would literally take us to
24 move the entire court out of the building into
25 leased space, which is basically building a new

1 courthouse for them. It's not cost effective to do
2 that, but we did look at it.

3 MS. GILLIAM: And your name is James
4 Pickrell, sir?

5 MR. PICKRELL: Yes.

6 MS. GILLIAM: Any other questions,
7 comments?

8 MR. DEAN: Yeah. My name is Craig
9 Dean, and I'm partners with my friend, Bobby Wright,
10 the building on the south site, as you guys call
11 it. Sitting here listening to -- I met a couple of
12 you guys before. And, first of all, we weren't even
13 notified about this, as owners of the building, that
14 you were going to have this meeting. I just want to
15 bring that to everybody's attention.

16 You mentioned a couple things that as
17 developers down there we deal with old buildings and
18 we deal with unique spaces that present problems.
19 And for you to talk about two minutes on the north
20 site and to say it's in a floodplain and that we
21 could not build above that, everybody -- every
22 building down here has been dealing with the floods
23 since Norfolk has been here.

24 To not utilize the north site for a
25 flood -- you know, you have the parking problem and

1 everything else which would be incorporated into
2 it. If you could build above the floodplain, which
3 might add another eight feet, which would get you
4 out of the floodplain very easily, you would also
5 help the city in the fact as continuing the progress
6 of Granby Street and the revitalization of it by
7 heading north.

8 To say that circulation problems and
9 stuff like that is a factor in it, I totally
10 disagree. If you gave me your plans, I could have
11 one of our many architects come up with a
12 circulation that will work just great. Architects
13 do amazing things now with computers and CADs and
14 everything else. They can solve those problems.
15 But the floodplain issue, that's -- I think that's
16 smoke for that particular problem.

17 As far as shutting down Monticello and
18 making that smaller, that's an okay option, but that
19 gets used a lot, too, to help feed the new
20 revitalized Downtown.

21 Taking our building there, you have a
22 lot more room over there to do what you need. And
23 if I go up Washington, D.C. -- I remember when you
24 guys were talking about, you know, flyovers or
25 whatever. There must be a hundred flyovers in the

1 D.C. area. Now, are they grandfathered in?
2 Probably. But to make it secure, you can go
3 underground for security. I'm 20 years a Navy
4 SEAL. I know about security. It can be done. And
5 so to not use the north site when the city basically
6 is giving it to you, saying, Please do this, to help
7 extend the revitalization of Downtown, it's just
8 ludicrous. And so I just -- I think you should look
9 at that harder.

10 The floodplain thing, that's easy to
11 overcome. Every building around here has overcome
12 that, and I think it's about a seven- to eight-foot
13 difference. If you put your parking garage down
14 there and build above your parking garage, the
15 floodplain is a very lame excuse, I think.

16 So I just wanted to put that out
17 there. You know, sometimes I feel like these
18 meetings are just -- we have to do this because the
19 book says so and you've got your mind made up
20 already, but it would be great to see the government
21 work in conjunction with the city instead of
22 stomping on them and making that a big black hole
23 right there, when we have people living down here
24 which we've been trying to do for a long time and we
25 have everything invested down here.

1 And so I think that just doing
2 something to work with us for a change would help,
3 and you guys -- it would be a lot better rapport
4 between big government and the city government. I
5 think it would make it a team effort, and there's
6 nothing that can't be overcome. When somebody picks
7 a site, solutions start happening. Myself and my
8 partners see that all the time. God, what are we
9 going to do? We think about it. And if people put
10 their minds together, anything is possible. And I'd
11 just say work with us on that, and everybody will
12 help, and the solutions will be met, and your
13 circulation needs and everything else will be met.
14 You'll find out those problems can be mitigated.
15 You know, by buying that building, you're talking
16 umpteen million dollars to go buy all the people out
17 because it's all sold out, and here, you know, a lot
18 less, I'm quite sure. So please think about that
19 very much.

20 MS. ROSATO: Thank you for your
21 comments.

22 MR. JAMES: I think everybody can hear
23 me. Okay. I'm Ellis W. James. I'm a lifelong
24 resident here in Norfolk. I, too, would like to see
25 a closer examination of the north site. My main

1 concern is for the people who have already committed
2 to moving into the south area.

3 I would like to raise a question about
4 the impact on the historic aspects of this. I
5 understand clearly Executive Order 11988. Is there
6 any override of security considerations that in any
7 way impact 11988? Let me give you an example, and
8 this is not personal. If you think about what
9 you've seen on the screen, a 50-foot setback is
10 somewhat of a pipe dream for security. If you look
11 at what happened in Oklahoma City, you will clearly
12 understand you'd need 500 feet of setback to protect
13 us against that kind of an attack.

14 Now, my concern is that this seems to
15 be very much driven allegedly by security but in
16 fact is not really the key issue. And I'm
17 interested in whether or not this question of
18 historical buildings and their presence in the area,
19 whichever site you consider, is any way impacted or
20 overridden by the question of security.

21 MR. HEWELL: I thank you for your
22 question. I'm going to try and answer it, but I may
23 need to ask you to help me. We are, for better or
24 worse, driven by, regulated by, subject to a lot of
25 requirements and processes, and they exist for a

1 variety of reasons. Some of them have been
2 legislated, some of them have been mandated by the
3 President. And the floodplain issue is one of
4 those. It is quite true that people build buildings
5 in floodplains. I'm an architect by training. I'm
6 well aware of that.

7 The federal government, the President
8 of the United States made a decision that unless it
9 couldn't be avoided, that was not something that the
10 federal government should do. And it's not just
11 for -- just to protect the federal buildings,
12 although that, given the extremely unusual weather
13 conditions that we've experienced this year, is kind
14 of in the front of our minds. But the floodplain
15 actually talks about not doing anything which would
16 encourage development of the floodplains. I mean,
17 it binds our hands quite a bit.

18 The only places in the country where we
19 have undertaken construction projects in floodplains
20 is pretty much where the entire city was in a
21 floodplain and we literally had no other choice.
22 And I can't argue with either of your points that
23 it's possible to build a building in a floodplain.
24 I cannot add -- I'm just telling you that as
25 employees of the federal government undertaking a

1 federal project, we are constrained by an executive
2 order.

3 You brought up another point which I've
4 now managed to talk myself out of.

5 MS. ROSATO: The setback.

6 MR. HEWELL: The setback, right.
7 Security has been a very difficult thing for us to
8 deal with for the last ten or 15 years. It changes
9 all the time. And every time it changes, it gets
10 worse in terms of the requirements that we have,
11 because as I mentioned, when we started this
12 project, we didn't yet have a setback requirement.
13 We did have a requirement for dealing with the
14 separate paths of circulation. But when the setback
15 requirement first came in, it was essentially a
16 hundred feet or 50 feet minimum, and for any setback
17 less than 50 feet there were height requirements
18 that as you got closer and closer, smaller and
19 smaller setbacks.

20 And we actually -- around the country
21 we were able to build a couple of buildings which
22 even after the setback requirements came in with
23 less than 50-foot setbacks by putting coning into
24 the exterior of the building. As an option, that
25 was taken away from us later in the process of

1 developing the security requirements. There is now,
2 we are told at least, no waiver on the 50-foot
3 setback requirement. Again, I think I understand
4 that. I'm not sure that I can defend it completely
5 to your satisfaction other than to tell you that
6 it's a requirement that we have to deal with.

7 The separate forms of circulation, when
8 that requirement approval first came in several
9 years ago, we tended to make compromises in existing
10 buildings. Our latitude to make compromises has
11 steadily been taken away as well. We're dealing
12 with a very heavily security-minded system of
13 justice and it's due to many, many factors, and it's
14 hard to argue with the thought and purpose behind
15 those, but it makes our job that much harder. And
16 other than that, I'm not sure how to answer your
17 question.

18 MS. GILLIAM: Any other questions?

19 MR. HUNTER: Just a comment. My name
20 is Blount Hunter, and I live here in Norfolk. I'm
21 speaking as an individual. The topic today is the
22 impact on historic environment. I don't think
23 there's any conclusion other than the fact that
24 taking an existing historically -- historically
25 significant building would have a negative impact on

1 the historic environment of Downtown Norfolk.

2 I know that the historic district
3 boundaries changed midgame, but the building didn't
4 change midgame. The building is a contributing
5 structure and a very significant building. It is a
6 complete non sequitur to give us all warm and fuzzy
7 feelings about the GSA connecting existing historic
8 buildings to existing courthouses or post offices
9 with the magic of a glass atrium connection. I
10 don't think any of those show buildings that were
11 historic that were destroyed for an expansion of a
12 courthouse building.

13 MR. HEWELL: Actually, it did.

14 MR. HUNTER: Well, if it did, I
15 apologize. That's a very different issue than
16 taking a building for a footprint. I'm actually
17 excited that the court is committed to Downtown
18 Norfolk. I'm excited that we have an architectural
19 firm with the quality and reputation of Hartman-Cox
20 doing this job, and I think they can do an
21 incredible job in a creative sense on another site.

22 MS. ROSATO: Thank you for your
23 comments.

24 MR. HANNAH: Hi. My name is Trey
25 Hannah. I can talk loud. I have a comment and then

1 a question. The comment is that you've done some
2 wonderful things preserving historic buildings.
3 Part of the criteria you-all are searching for has
4 possibly been to take some old historic buildings
5 and put them back into use such as a schoolhouse and
6 brewery.

7 And that isn't what's going on here.
8 If you-all vacate this building, the historical
9 structure would still be maintained and you wouldn't
10 be abandoning it for disuse. But -- so -- and,
11 also, this used to be occupied by and shared with
12 the Postal Service, but somebody else can take it
13 over and keep its historical significance. And that
14 was the comment.

15 And the other thing is you showed the
16 50 -- the 50 foot that you need for the security
17 needs. It shows on the Monticello side, but what
18 about the Granby Street side? It doesn't seem like
19 that's going to be according to the graph.

20 MR. HEWELL: I'm sorry if I didn't make
21 that clear. The current south side option that
22 we're looking at allows us to achieve a 50-foot
23 setback around all three sides of the new annex, and
24 it actually gives us the opportunity to achieve the
25 50-foot setback on the back side of the Hoffman

1 building, which we don't have now. So it enhances
2 the security of the Hoffman building, but it doesn't
3 create a 50-foot setback around the entire -- around
4 the existing building, but it does in the new
5 building.

6 MR. HANNAH: Okay.

7 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: My name is Baxter
8 Simmons, Sr. My son, Baxter, Jr., is the Baxter's
9 that you have been speaking of. If you will allow
10 me a little latitude, I've got three quick
11 questions -- they don't require a long answer -- and
12 some comments. Since we're investing multimillion
13 dollars here, if you'll give us that opportunity.

14 The first question is how many square
15 feet are you trying to achieve in your annex?

16 MR. HEWELL: If you'll give me one
17 second.

18 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: The second question,
19 while you're looking at that one, is on the security
20 issue of the 50-foot setback, how high is the
21 setback required to be? You said it has to be 50
22 feet deep. How high does it need to be?

23 MR. MORRELL: The setback requirement
24 is for vehicular traffic.

25 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: I understand. Thank

1 you.

2 MR. MORRELL: It's approximately
3 200,000 square feet of space we're trying to create.

4 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: Two hundred
5 thousand? Okay.

6 MR. MORRELL: It's basically the same
7 size as this building right here.

8 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: Sir?

9 MR. MORRELL: It's approximately the
10 same size as the Hoffman Courthouse.

11 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: And how about in
12 doing that on the existing south site, how high
13 would you go with that building?

14 MR. MORRELL: In the preliminary plans,
15 without getting into design, we haven't started
16 design yet, but it looks like approximately six
17 stories.

18 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: Okay. And I think
19 that gives me an opportunity to speak to the issue
20 now. And as it refers to the historic issue -- and
21 I know that's why we're here today -- I think we're
22 trying to preserve two buildings here. We're trying
23 to preserve the Hoffman Courthouse, which I respect
24 very deeply, and we're trying to preserve 500 Granby
25 Street, which we've got a major investment in, along

1 with the owners of the building, the 24 homeowners.

2 I would like to say that there are
3 several opportunities here. And I'll run through
4 them real quick, and we'll talk about them at your
5 other meeting like you had suggested. First, it
6 looks like we're trying to force this addition into
7 this area to preserve this courthouse, and I
8 understand that part.

9 Now, there are two pieces of property
10 besides what we're talking about here today. One is
11 the surface parking lot on the other side of Scope
12 and one is the abandoned shopping center or defunct
13 shopping center at St. Paul's Avenue, one block
14 south of Brambleton Avenue, both of which have more
15 than enough land to accomplish a new structure
16 meeting maximum security requirements, meeting all
17 the needs that you require and eliminating you
18 having to spend atrocious amounts of money, taxpayer
19 money, to buy out condominiums in 500 Granby in a
20 condemnation process.

21 Now, I would like to know how much this
22 has -- no answer right now -- how much that has been
23 considered.

24 Number three, the Greyhound bus site,
25 let me assure you one thing. And I understand it's

1 a 500-year floodplain, so that means once every 500
2 years it's expected to flood. Now, we've got to be
3 practical here. I served in the city government for
4 eight years and I know how you have to work these
5 things. You have to use common sense. If it floods
6 at the Greyhound bus station, you aren't going to be
7 anywhere near that courthouse at 500 feet away, so
8 let's think about that. That is not even an issue
9 that should be considered other than the legality of
10 the issue. And if that's the problem, you need to
11 go through Congress and you need to tell them to
12 give you an exception. So I don't think that that
13 functions as an issue at all.

14 You have a catwalk in Wheeling, West
15 Virginia, so there's no issue with a catwalk, as I
16 can see it, across Granby Street or a tunnel
17 underneath, which is obviously.

18 You mentioned earlier about the judges
19 being confronted with witnesses, and I agree with
20 that wholeheartedly. Also, the U.S. Attorney's
21 Office, as we understand it, does not want to
22 necessarily be located in this building because they
23 don't want to have prisoners coming back and forth
24 like you're talking about -- may I finish? Coming
25 back and forth and confronting their witnesses. The

1 witnesses are terrified enough without having to be
2 exposed to that same environment. It's my
3 understanding that they would prefer to be in a
4 separate building. And if that's the case with the
5 annex, then you've answered that question. But
6 understand that they don't have to be located, as I
7 understand it, in this immediate annex.

8 Now, having said that, you've got, you
9 said, 200,000 square feet. If you go up on each
10 side of the federal courthouse -- and that can be
11 done without interrupting any federal operation,
12 because it can be attached to the side of those
13 buildings, and your cut-throughs can be made, you
14 know, once the construction is finished. But if you
15 went up, you can get -- on the Brambleton side, you
16 can get 8,000 square feet per floor. On the side on
17 the Bute Street, you can get 6400 square feet per
18 floor. You can also keep your secured parking for
19 bringing prisoners in and that type of thing to the
20 existing courthouse by starting at the second
21 floor. And you can go higher if you need to.
22 You're going to go six floors in the new one anyway,
23 so, you know, you're going to put out quite a bit.

24 My next question would be then -- or
25 statement would be then you can use the Greyhound

1 property for let's say the U.S. attorneys and those
2 types of operations and also parking.

3 And then -- I'm just about through.

4 Then the other option is has any consideration been
5 given to using the center of this area of this
6 building which is open at the present time? And the
7 other question is what presently is the basement
8 being used for?

9 MS. ROSATO: That's a lot of questions,
10 sir.

11 MS. GILLIAM: I was going to say I
12 can't keep track of everything you said. Have you
13 got --

14 MR. HEWELL: Just a clarification on
15 the U.S. attorneys. There was a point back in the
16 '90s when we were thinking about including the U.S.
17 attorneys in the building, but they are not in the
18 current housing plans for the annex. Our intention
19 is to leave them outside the building.

20 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: Okay, good.

21 MS. ROSATO: Thank you, sir.

22 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: Well, I had --

23 MS. ROSATO: Did you want to comment on
24 the --

25 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: The 48,000 -- the

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1 square footage in the basement.

2 MS. ROSATO: On the basement or the --

3 MR. DAVIDSON: It is true that there is
4 a good deal of space in the basement in this
5 building that is underutilized. It is our --
6 generally considered to be not proper form to put
7 people in basements and so it's difficult to figure
8 out what function we could place down there to make
9 use of that space additionally other than for
10 storage space. It does not work, that is to say,
11 for courtrooms and chambers for judges, for
12 instance.

13 MS. GILLIAM: Did you have anything
14 else to say?

15 MR. DAVIDSON: Yeah, I just wanted to
16 follow up a little bit on the comments with regard
17 to adding to the north and the south in the space
18 you mentioned. If you look at the problem with the
19 abstract, that is to say, just adding space to this
20 building to make it larger to accommodate our
21 200,000 square feet of additional space, in theory
22 you are correct. You could put saddlebags to the
23 north and to the south for full height and make up
24 more or less the sort of area that we need.

25 Unfortunately, the type of space that

1 we need in order to solve both space and the
2 security problems is one of courtroom and chamber
3 space. And courtrooms and chambers come in certain
4 sizes and they act as units and they have therefore
5 certain dimensional requirements. And so they
6 don't -- those sort of dimensional requirements mean
7 that the spaces can't be fit in a nice, little
8 sliver that you might add to the existing building.

9 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: Just one more on
10 historical and I'm through.

11 MS. ROSATO: We have other folks that
12 need to speak.

13 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: I understand. I
14 know. We've got major investors here.

15 MS. ROSATO: Absolutely.

16 MR. SIMMONS, SR.: And let me just
17 assure you, I understand what you're saying, but
18 just throw this in the back of your hat. The
19 basement could be used for your security and your
20 prisoners and that type of thing and be very secure,
21 since nobody can get down there.

22 My comment on the historical issue,
23 okay, it is my understanding that there is a law --
24 and you have to help me here -- that says that you
25 have to -- you have the responsibility of exhausting

1 every other possibility that is adverse to taking a
2 historical building. This isn't happening, because
3 there are a few other locations. And I am told by
4 the City of Norfolk that they're interested in doing
5 a new library, and it was going to be potentially at
6 the Greyhound site.

7 I think this building should be
8 preserved. This building could become the library
9 and you could keep the courtroom for Judge Hoffman
10 or any other activities and make it an educational
11 experience for our children, and the building would
12 be preserved, because nobody's going to destroy a
13 library, and you can build your new courthouse in a
14 proper setting. And I think you really need to look
15 at that instead of trying to force this issue.

16 But in conclusion, I'll just say that
17 we are strongly opposed to your taking the south
18 site. We did everything that we had to do. No one
19 stepped to the plate and said they were interested
20 in that property. And now that we're ready to open
21 three weeks from now, you know, all of a sudden
22 everybody wants our building. And I don't think
23 that that is in the interest of the citizens, the
24 taxpayers or the federal government. We do need to
25 work together to accomplish your goal but not at our

1 expense. Thank you.

2 MS. ROSATO: Thank you for your
3 comments, sir.

4 MR. PIERCE: I don't need the
5 microphone. I'm Darren Pierce. Baxter Simmons, Sr.
6 mentioned about all the investment dollars going
7 into this project. That's actually my company
8 that's doing a large portion of that. I'm here --
9 I'm trying to formulate this as a question, but I
10 think you guys probably knew this all the time.
11 You're coming into a hostile environment, basically,
12 and expanding to the south side or the north side of
13 the other properties makes a lot more sense.

14 Sitting here, I'm not convinced that
15 you have researched the north side. You mentioned a
16 floodplain. You should be more specific about the
17 floodplain as a term. Are you referring to a flood
18 zone, a flood hazard zone is what I'm concerned
19 about.

20 MR. HEWELL: I'm sorry, you're sort of
21 out of my field of expertise.

22 MR. PIERCE: Is it a 500-year
23 floodplain?

24 MR. HEWELL: It is a 500-year
25 floodplain. The executive order that we're

1 following makes no distinction between the 100-year
2 floodplain and 500-year floodplain.

3 MR. PIERCE: I'm just saying you need
4 to exhaust all other options.

5 MR. HEWELL: All other options --

6 MR. PIERCE: So you have a 500-year
7 flood zone is your number one concern, and the
8 second concern is seven lanes of traffic?

9 MR. HEWELL: (Nodded head.)

10 MR. PIERCE: You mentioned you need
11 400,000 square feet of space?

12 MR. HEWELL: Two-.

13 MR. PIERCE: Two- plus the existing
14 two-, 400,000. Is it possible to build a
15 400,000-square-foot facility on the Greyhound bus
16 site?

17 MR. HEWELL: I didn't say that, but --

18 MR. PIERCE: With the exception of
19 the --

20 MR. HEWELL: We haven't studied putting
21 a 400,000 --

22 MR. PIERCE: You haven't studied it?

23 MR. HEWELL: We haven't studied putting
24 a 400,000-square-foot building in there.

25 MR. PIERCE: I would like to submit

1 that you study that. If you put a
2 400,000-square-foot new facility on the Greyhound
3 bus site, you'd get your 50-foot setback and you
4 would address all the security concerns, and you can
5 make the City of Norfolk better.

6 MR. HEWELL: If we -- if it came to
7 pass that we would -- that we started looking for
8 solutions to the construction of an entirely new
9 courthouse, we would not limit our search for the
10 site to the Greyhound bus site. We would be looking
11 at all possible sites that would be the best site
12 for building the courthouse. And I can pretty much
13 tell you we wouldn't build it in a floodplain.

14 MR. PIERCE: I can imagine a lot of
15 that is an economical concern, which has not been
16 addressed today as far as dollars.

17 MR. HEWELL: Well, we would look at
18 economics, yes.

19 MS. GILLIAM: Excuse me. Is there a
20 question here?

21 MR. PERREAULT: Good morning. I'm Mark
22 Perreault with the Norfolk Preservation Alliance.
23 We certainly are very appreciative that the federal
24 court and GSA are willing to retain this magnificent
25 structure, one of the great buildings of Norfolk,

1 and the city would be a much lesser place without
2 it.

3 I guess I hope that the gentleman who
4 spoke earlier and said that there had been -- that
5 this hearing was merely a formality and the decision
6 had been made, I hope he was incorrect, and I hope
7 that GSA is seeing and learning more about what kind
8 of city Norfolk is and how many people over the last
9 20 years have put so much in making this city and
10 this Downtown in particular what it is. It's a very
11 compact place, it's a very walkable place and it's a
12 very delicate and fragile place, because everything
13 that is done in this Downtown affects things around
14 it. And nothing damages our Downtown more than
15 losing the few remaining historic buildings we have
16 in the Granby corridor.

17 I want to -- I think that if everyone
18 gets together that there is a win-win situation. I
19 don't know exactly what it is. I think it's
20 complex. But I noticed that in particular with the
21 north site, that you didn't have a drawing -- or you
22 don't have a drawing out here showing what the north
23 site looks like. Unlike the west site and the south
24 site, it wasn't looked at apparently in much
25 detail. It was sort of tossed aside at an early

1 stage for some reason, maybe the floodplain issue or
2 something else.

3 But a couple of problems that you cited
4 on the north side, one is architectural unity. You
5 certainly were able to accept the idea of the west
6 site providing architectural unity even though it
7 was divided by a street. And while you didn't say
8 too much about this, I suspect the principal reason
9 is the Brambleton Avenue -- different character of
10 Brambleton Avenue from Granby Street.

11 And I know that the city -- and I think
12 that could be confirmed by the representative of the
13 city today, if you'd like to hear it -- is committed
14 to doing whatever can be done to make crossing
15 Brambleton Avenue a much more comfortable experience
16 than it is today. And there's a whole national
17 movement on traffic calming, on streetscape
18 improvements that has been very successful in
19 changing dramatically the character of the city
20 street.

21 We want to do something on Brambleton
22 Avenue independent of this project because we want a
23 seamless transition from this part of Downtown to
24 the other side of Brambleton. And I think if the
25 court, the judges and GSA would enter into a

1 dialogue with the city about the specifics of what
2 could be done crossing Brambleton Avenue that you
3 might not only get comfortable with the idea, you
4 might get excited about the idea, because I think in
5 some ways, the north site provides you some
6 advantages as opposed to the south site, more room
7 to build on.

8 Now, that only -- if you can get past
9 that point -- and I don't expect you can do that
10 without some real details and some real
11 discussions -- then you can address the floodplain
12 issue. I think you acknowledged that there are some
13 exceptions that are necessary. I suspect politics
14 can play a lot of role in that. If everybody who
15 loves Norfolk, including the court, can get around
16 this and go to Senator Warner and Senator Allen and
17 say, We want this to happen, I think we'll solve the
18 floodplain issue. And in doing that, we're going to
19 make not only a great courthouse but make this
20 wonderful city that much a greater city and show
21 what people can do when they work together. Thank
22 you.

23 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: My name is Baxter
24 Simmons, Jr. And I hope I'm not as long-winded as
25 Dad, but I do have to say that this is the first

1 time we've seen or talked to anybody from GSA, and
2 putting millions of dollars into a business, it's
3 real disappointing. But if I may be allowed a
4 little leeway, I have two questions.

5 First of all, so we can understand the
6 need for the 200,000 square feet, based on some of
7 the slides you showed, some of the nice things that
8 you-all have done, they appear to be mostly between
9 about 40,000 and about 70,000 square feet.

10 MR. HEWELL: Several --

11 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: He's shaking his
12 head that's correct. The ones that you showed.

13 MR. HEWELL: They range in size, but
14 most of them are --

15 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: Two hundred thousand
16 square feet is reasonable. I understand courtrooms
17 and chambers. In addition to that, what else is
18 going to be in that building once it's done?

19 And then my other question is about the
20 floodplain issue. If the floodplain issue could be
21 given approval to build on that site, if Congress,
22 the President or whoever was to say that site would
23 be acceptable regardless of the floodplain issue,
24 would that north site then become a favorable site?

25 MR. HEWELL: It would not become the

1 favored site by any means. It is -- the floodplain
2 is --

3 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: An acceptable
4 alternative?

5 MR. HEWELL: No, please don't put that
6 in my mouth. The floodplain issue closed off
7 consideration fairly definitely for us because of
8 the prohibition. Before we found out that it was in
9 a floodplain, it was still not a favored site. And
10 the comments about the taming of Bussellton
11 Avenue -- Brambleton Avenue. I'm sorry. There's a
12 Bussellton Avenue in Philadelphia, I understand.

13 Brambleton Avenue and the other
14 comments that have been made notwithstanding, it's
15 not by any means an ideal annex situation. That's a
16 wide separation. If we wanted to build a separate,
17 unattached building, we would -- you know, we would
18 not be satisfying the project's goals and we would
19 certainly look at other sites then besides that
20 site.

21 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: I understand what
22 you're saying an ideal situation. What we're asking
23 is a city in the community is not necessarily that
24 you have an ideal situation but an acceptable
25 situation. And I look at two of your examples

1 there, Scranton, Pennsylvania, you put an atrium,
2 which looked to be a pretty sizable atrium; and in
3 Wheeling, West Virginia, you put a catwalk and
4 atrium.

5 Why could not a glass atrium with a
6 catwalk be built two, three, four stories high
7 overtop of Brambleton Avenue, not just a walk bridge
8 but an entire atrium, leaving 20 feet, 14 feet of
9 passage underneath? There's your connection for
10 your building. The Wheeling, West Virginia building
11 is sizable.

12 MR. HEWELL: I think you would agree
13 that there's a difference between an atrium 20 feet
14 into the air and an atrium that serves as the main
15 entrance to the complex, which it does in both of
16 the annexes that you're talking about.

17 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: That's fine, but
18 architecturally you can change that. We're looking
19 at a way to connect the buildings to make -- to help
20 you-all with your feasibility of circulation.

21 MR. HEWELL: And the entrance between
22 the old building and the new building in both of
23 those cases was considerably smaller than Brambleton
24 Avenue.

25 MS. GILLIAM: Sir, excuse me. We have

1 three more people who have questions. Let's get to
2 them and then I'll get back to you.

3 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: Okay.

4 MS. ROSATO: Excuse me. Before we
5 continue, we'd like to make one comment.

6 MR. HEWELL: Before you mention that, I
7 was just reminded that we are not at this moment
8 approved or funded for a project that would build an
9 entirely new courthouse. We have project
10 authorization for an annex. But if you didn't hear,
11 our project approval at this point from Congress is
12 for a 200,000-square-foot addition, not for a
13 400,000-square-foot infrastructure.

14 MR. LADD: Yes. My name is Ed Ladd,
15 and I am the board chair for an organization called
16 the Downtown Norfolk Council. We represent 300
17 businesses in Downtown Norfolk. And, obviously, we
18 have the best -- we believe we have the best
19 interests of this entire community at heart.

20 We had previously communicated in
21 writing about two pages that -- we addressed it to
22 Mr. Rob Hewell. And I would just like to ask that
23 you enter this communication into the record. I
24 won't read two pages, but we do support pursuing
25 that north site strongly for all the reasons that

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1 have been mentioned by most of the other speakers.

2 MR. HEWELL: And I do remember your
3 letter, and we'll be happy to enter it into the
4 record.

5 MR. LADD: Thank you. Would you like a
6 copy?

7 MR. HEWELL: If you want to provide it
8 to us here so we can get it, that would be fine. We
9 have other copies back at the office.

10 (See attached letter.)

11 MR. BOLCH: I'm Craig Bolch. I'm
12 actually an owner in the building next door. The
13 first comment I'd like to make is -- it's referred
14 to by the press as a project, but, really, I don't
15 think that's the case. There are many of us who
16 have closed, live there and we own it, so to refer
17 to it as a project is not really an accurate
18 statement, in my mind.

19 I think a lot of people have talked
20 about the north site enough, but looking at your --
21 one of your slides there for your proposal, the east
22 site kind of option intrigued me a little bit,
23 because your proposal is to make Monticello a
24 two-lane road. Well, if you did that and went to
25 the east, there's plenty of room over there.

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1 There's more room there than there is on our site,
2 plenty of room for setbacks and all that.

3 And, also, if you expand to the east,
4 you would have your operational objectives met, too,
5 as far as separating everything. That road would be
6 easily crossed over by anybody just like your west
7 proposal for Granby. It wouldn't be any more busier
8 than Granby Street. Or you could have a tunnel from
9 here to -- it wouldn't really be that far.

10 MR. HEWELL: Just so I understand your
11 question, are you suggesting construction of the
12 annex on the other side of Monticello Avenue?

13 MR. BOLCH: Yes.

14 MR. HEWELL: Wouldn't that involve
15 interference with the Scope?

16 MR. BOLCH: No, absolutely not.
17 There's traffic lanes on there that work probably
18 half the time. You know, they could be the site of
19 this place. I mean, there's tons of room out
20 there. There is more room than there is to the
21 south. So I think maybe you guys could look a
22 little more into that. That was one comment.

23 And, also, it seems like there's two
24 different executive orders that you guys are kind of
25 bound by. One was --

1 MR. HEWELL: At least.

2 MR. BOLCH: -- the floodplain and at
3 the same time the historical aspects. So one of
4 those it seems like might have to win out over the
5 other. But this meeting is called to address the
6 historical aspects of any expansion. Well, it seems
7 to me there's only one site -- or one proposal that
8 really affects anything historic, and that's the one
9 that you-all are -- your preferred option, I guess.

10 But the case could be made that -- I
11 mean, that building is older than this one. You can
12 make the case that -- or argument that that is more
13 historic than this one, I mean, so I don't think
14 that one needs to be torn down, because I think
15 there are other options.

16 MS. GILLIAM: Can you give your name,
17 sir?

18 MR. BOLCH: Craig Bolch, B-o-l-c-h.

19 MS. ROSATO: Thank you. Thank you for
20 your comments, too.

21 MS. ALLEN-GRIMES: I don't need the
22 microphone. I'm Allison Allen-Grimes, 1913 North
23 Brandon Avenue. I'm a resident of Norfolk, and I
24 have a lot of concern about our continuing loss of
25 historic buildings in the city. Not only the

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1 federal courthouse and the Showcase Building, as has
2 been pointed out, this is a historic district and
3 whatever addition or expansion is made to the
4 building, it should use contact sensitive design
5 regarding the whole surrounding area. We cannot
6 afford to lose any more of the historic buildings
7 that are the fabric of our Downtown, and I'm opposed
8 to the removal or any alteration to the Showcase
9 Building.

10 A number of alternatives have been
11 suggested, going up, going to the east. If the city
12 wanted two lanes on Monticello Avenue rather than
13 four lanes, rather than going across to the east
14 side of the street, you could just go directly out
15 back of the building and put your annex on top of
16 where the street is now. Perhaps you can go to the
17 south side with your parking area and perhaps you
18 can incorporate part of the north side property for
19 parking or part of the operation in an annex.

20 I would disagree with those folks who
21 suggest that the courthouse completely relocate. If
22 this building is vacated, there's no assurance that
23 it would stay in Downtown Norfolk or that it would
24 even stay in the City of Norfolk. I think the
25 federal courthouse is an important part of the city

1 and important to the vitality of Downtown, and I
2 don't think any of us would want to see that
3 happen. And I guess that's all I have to say.

4 MS. GILLIAM: Can you spell your last
5 name?

6 MS. ALLEN-GRIMES: A-l-l-e-n hyphen
7 G-r-i-m-e-s.

8 MR. MALENDOSKI: I don't need a mike
9 either. Chris Malendoski. I'm from --

10 MS. GILLIAM: Excuse me. Can you spell
11 your last name?

12 MR. MALENDOSKI: Yes, sure, every
13 letter in the alphabet. It's M-a-l-e-n-d-o-s-k-i.

14 I just want to preface this by saying
15 we very much support and can understand the need in
16 today's climate to have a secure and
17 state-of-the-art facility, and that's why, you know,
18 we also -- our company's position is we would
19 support a new facility not just because we're part
20 of the development at 500 Granby.

21 And, by the way, it was called the
22 Showcase Building, but we should probably refer to
23 it now as The Lofts at 500. That's the official
24 name. It's a registered condominium in the State of
25 Virginia with 25 units. Most of the residences

1 already closed, and some of those residents are
2 actual servants in the government via the military
3 and other government agencies. So we're very
4 supportive of their needs and we're very patriotic
5 and we want to see the right things be done.

6 Having said that, it's a historic
7 building, an historic building, and so is this one.
8 If a wing was annexed down on the south side or even
9 across the west, it's going to ruin the scale from
10 one historic building, this one, it will destroy
11 another historic building and it will take away the
12 new corridor, that important little new corridor.
13 When the new park is constructed over here, you can
14 look over and see Scope and all that. It would
15 create kind of a megablock, and we are very much
16 against that.

17 So I would hope that we could use
18 reason and the utmost rational -- what makes the
19 most sense, the least amount of money to build the
20 best facility that you could have and go to the
21 north site.

22 The other thing I just wanted to
23 mention is that I have -- we have heard -- there's
24 rumors that one of the reasons why this building
25 doesn't want to be parted with, there are some

1 people who have sentimental attachments to this
2 building. Whether that's true or not -- if it's not
3 true, that's fine. If it is, we need to remind
4 ourselves that this is a public building and if
5 there's any public servants that work here that have
6 sentimental attachment, don't want to part with this
7 building because of -- that's not a legitimate
8 reason to look at other options. I thank you for
9 your time.

10 MR. HARTIG: Yes. My name is Dennis
11 Hartig. I'm from The Virginian-Pilot. I'd like to
12 follow up on Mr. Simmons' question about the square
13 footage requirements. Mr. Simmons -- I think your
14 answer to Mr. Simmons' question, you said it's an
15 expansion of 200,000 square feet and, as I
16 understand from his discussion, driven at least in
17 substantial part by the need for additional
18 courtrooms. But it's been recently reported that
19 the case loads in this district of court have gone
20 down.

21 Can you reconcile for us why, with the
22 declining case load, you're projecting 200,000
23 square feet in additional courtroom space?

24 MS. GILLIAM: Excuse me. I was going
25 to say I can talk to the media after. We've had

1 media sign in, so I will speak to the media after.

2 We're only taking questions from --

3 MR. HARTIG: Well, you never answered
4 our questions about this, so this is our appropriate
5 forum. We asked this question and --

6 MS. ROSATO: Excuse me. We'll answer
7 your question.

8 MR. HEWELL: It's a legitimate
9 question.

10 MS. GILLIAM: I was going to say he
11 said he would answer your question.

12 MR. HEWELL: No, I think questions
13 about the need for the expansion are fair. The
14 simple answer is that we build for 30-year
15 requirements and not for the case log, but I'd like
16 to offer Judge Morgan a chance to deal with your
17 question. Judge Morgan is a sitting judge here in
18 Norfolk. He's also on the national Space &
19 Facilities Committee of the courts and he's
20 intimately involved in the requirements.

21 MS. ROSATO: Judge.

22 JUDGE MORGAN: The decision to expand
23 the courthouse space is one that's based on national
24 need and statistics. We report each year our case
25 load, and it was decided ten years ago that we

1 needed this extra space. Our case load, if you want
2 a comparison, you can compare it to gas prices.
3 They fluctuate. But the long-term trend is
4 definitely up. And where you see a reduction in one
5 year, that's not going to continue. As the
6 population of the area grows, inevitably, so will
7 the case load of the courts.

8 So it was decided ten years ago that
9 Norfolk needed the space. We're part of the Eastern
10 District of Virginia, which includes a courthouse in
11 Alexandria, a courthouse in Richmond and a
12 courthouse in Newport News. The courthouse in
13 Alexandria was completed and opened in the early
14 '90s, I think '93 or '94.

15 The courthouse in Richmond, a brand new
16 courthouse in Richmond, is currently under
17 construction. There's a new courthouse that is in
18 the planning stages in Newport News. It's much
19 further along than this project. We're talking
20 about letting the contract go to construction for
21 the court. That one does not involve a significant
22 expansion. It's to replace the outmoded facilities
23 in an old post office building in Newport News.

24 But Norfolk did not -- was not awarded
25 a new courthouse. In other words, we do not have

1 Congress's permission to build an entirely new
2 courthouse, which would cost us considerably more
3 money than building an annex. We're only authorized
4 to build an annex.

5 Now, a lot has been said about the
6 taxpayer dollar and so forth and about the north
7 site. The major problem from the construction
8 standpoint and from the court function standpoint is
9 that a building on the north site would be an
10 entirely separate building. It would require a
11 duplication of all of the security personnel and
12 security equipment that we have here, which would be
13 an enormous expense.

14 A tunnel under Brambleton Avenue or a
15 pathway that goes over Brambleton Avenue is not
16 acceptable from a security standpoint. You could
17 not move witnesses, prisoners or anyone else in our
18 current climate of security through tunnels or over
19 passovers from one building to another. So they'd
20 have to operate as two entirely separate entities,
21 which not only would be an operational nightmare but
22 it would be -- the cost of security would really be
23 prohibitive.

24 If you went to the north site, you
25 would have to just build a whole new courthouse, and

1 we're not funded for that. And realistically even
2 though our statistics would probably support the
3 extra space, to get funding for a whole new
4 courthouse would be 15 or 20 years down the road,
5 and we need the space right now.

6 MS. ROSATO: Thank you, Judge.
7 Time for one more question.

8 MR. FURR: Just a brief comment. I'm
9 Carter Furr, a board member and past president of
10 the Norfolk Historical Society. This hearing, of
11 course, is on the question of the historical
12 significance of this project. I'd just like to
13 comment that the building on the south side, which I
14 have no interest in financially, goes back to -- I
15 understand to 1914 and is the oldest building in the
16 immediate vicinity of this courthouse. It should be
17 the last place that should be selected for
18 demolition for this project. I just wanted to make
19 that comment supporting some of the others comments.

20 MS. GILLIAM: We have one more comment
21 here.

22 MR. WRIGHT: Hi. I'm Bobby Wright,
23 co-developer of the building as well as a resident.
24 I own one of the condominiums and am presently
25 residing there. First of all, I'd like to say we

1 are very excited that GSA and the government has
2 selected the City of Norfolk for expansion. We do
3 treasure the court system here, the jobs and the
4 economic impact to the area, so it needs to be clear
5 and I think everyone here would support that we want
6 you here and we need you here. You've been here a
7 long time. You are part of the community. So
8 that's really not the issue.

9 The issue comes down to partnering with
10 the very community that you've resided within for so
11 long. As many people mentioned here, we've known so
12 little about this process and we had felt somewhat
13 shunned from the process. It even was noted by my
14 partner that we were not notified of the meeting.

15 But with that said, with that
16 excitement we always want to look for, how can we
17 work together and make this home good for business
18 and good for residents? Using the floodplain as one
19 of the reasons to totally discount the north really
20 flies in the face of probably other policies within
21 the federal government.

22 I'm not sure that this is one that's
23 still in place, but I worked with GSA quite a bit
24 with our former development company. And one of the
25 policies of the federal government was and still may

1 be that GSA can consider all urban buildings for
2 expansion before looking into the suburbs for
3 expansion.

4 The reason I bring that up, I'm not
5 sure that's the case now, but it seems to me that
6 set precedence that the spirit of our country and
7 our federal government has been to preserve old
8 structures and to invigorate the urban areas that
9 with the '50s, people left, and now we know that
10 they're so important. And we did another issue with
11 transportation and the reason that density is
12 important. So I'm just curious if the government
13 still sees through GSA's eyes the importance of
14 urban space and filling that space first. That's my
15 first question.

16 The second question, which kind of ties
17 into that, is the fact that the government has also
18 given incentives to developers and owners and buyers
19 such as ourselves to again come into these areas,
20 areas in which, you know, Granby Street six years
21 ago, some folks could let's say shoot a cannon and
22 hit no one. And so the government -- the spirit,
23 again, with the federal government was, Let's give
24 reason, let's give reason to bring people back.

25 So we have two policies, and I don't

1 know where they fall within the floodplain versus
2 these two, which is probably one, but it seems to me
3 there's two very good arguments right there being
4 made on why taking The Lofts at 500 makes no sense.
5 And that you say the 500-year floodplain, you have
6 to do this, and it's all politics. There are people
7 that will listen, because the folks who will listen
8 are elected, and they will listen to constituents,
9 given the opportunity to do so.

10 So I'm just curious whether those two
11 programs, if those are too easy -- well, the federal
12 tax credit and the state tax credit certainly exist,
13 but the one about promoting urban space and GSA
14 taking the first look at that, thus showing that
15 there is a value in keeping old buildings and a
16 value in filling them, a value in bringing economics
17 to the urban areas, where those two tie into the
18 argument. Thank you.

19 MR. HEWELL: Just to confirm what you
20 said, I don't know how far back you go in looking at
21 this, but the original executive order was 11512,
22 and I think that set the goal of locating federal
23 agencies in center cities. That was replaced by
24 12072, the other executive order, which essentially,
25 my word, paraphrasing, says that all federal

1 agencies should try to locate their offices in
2 central business areas unless there's an operational
3 reason why they have to be somewhere else. So,
4 yeah, I think you're right. I think it's still our
5 intention and our goal to support urban areas.

6 MS. ROSATO: You already asked a
7 question. I'd like to give anyone else an
8 opportunity who's interested. Yes.

9 MS. STONE: I'm Mary Stone. I'm
10 actually a resident of Norfolk. But I just had a
11 question. It's kind of a follow-up question to the
12 lady who mentioned using the east side. Is that if
13 the city were to agree to close that portion of
14 Monticello Avenue and do like we showed in that
15 first slide where you have an extension that butts
16 right up against this building, would that meet your
17 200,000-square-foot need and the requirement for a
18 50-foot setback on that other -- the Scope side?

19 MR. HEWELL: Well, the direct answer to
20 your question is probably yes, but I don't think we
21 can be cavalier about closing Monticello Avenue. I
22 mean, that would almost be for the city.

23 MS. ROSATO: We've got about ten more
24 minutes. Are there any other questions?

25 MR. MANDLE: My name is Rob Mandle.

1 I'm a planner by trade and a recent resident of
2 Norfolk. There's been a lot of talk of the street
3 crossing on Brambleton. You guys have already
4 expressed that you're willing to cross Granby on the
5 west side site. To what extent -- and I guess this
6 is a comment that hasn't really been addressed by
7 the individuals. What types of improvements and
8 changes does the City of Norfolk need to make to
9 Brambleton to make it an acceptable crossing such as
10 the north site, the wetlands or the floodplain issue
11 aside, could be an acceptable location?

12 MS. GILLIAM: Before we answer your
13 question, can I have your last name, please?

14 MR. MANDLE: Yes, Mandle.

15 MS. GILLIAM: M-a-n-d-e-l?

16 MR. MANDLE: L-e.

17 MR. DAVIDSON: I'm going to just try to
18 start with the answer to the question. Putting the
19 floodplain issue aside for a moment, there are at
20 least two things that need to be done with
21 Brambleton and with the courthouse. The first is
22 that Brambleton needs to be narrowed by at least 50
23 or 60 percent so that the dimension between the
24 north site and this courthouse is very substantially
25 less, as in the distance that we would have if we

1 went across Granby Street.

2 The second thing is that the reason the
3 west site works a little bit better architecturally
4 and from a planning standpoint is that it is
5 opposite the entrance to this building. That makes
6 a big difference in the way people relate to the
7 judicial complex, relate to the building. The way
8 the new facility will relate to this building makes
9 a big difference to the way we extend this, the
10 two -- the annex and this building. The north site
11 does not face the entrance to this building and
12 therefore will relate to it in a very, very
13 different way. That is, we don't really see that
14 site as part of this building at all and never will,
15 because it is not related to the entrance or to any
16 significant side of this building other than
17 architectural responses are our primary responses.

18 MS. GILLIAM: Okay, I see both of your
19 hands. I just want to make sure, is there anyone
20 who has not spoken or has asked a question who wants
21 to do so?

22 MS. ROSATO: I want to reiterate that
23 there will be forms as you leave the courtroom today
24 that you can submit your questions to. And, also,
25 we have our web site.

1 MS. GILLIAM: I think he had his hand
2 up first.

3 MR. MALENDOSKI: Chris Malendoski
4 again. We're to understand that there's 11- or 12
5 million that's been appropriated from Congress so
6 far, and so that would be barely enough to condemn
7 one of these properties. You're going to have to
8 still get funding to -- for construction for the
9 annex. Why not -- you could get a site up here for
10 free. Basically, the city will give it to you. Use
11 that money that's already been appropriated to this
12 building. Sell this building for a premium, and I
13 can guarantee you that if it gets back into the
14 private sector, the City of Norfolk and the Norfolk
15 Preservation Alliance will see to it that this
16 building is preserved and preserved in the right
17 way. And use all that money to -- in the
18 construction of a new facility rather than having to
19 wait 15 or 20 years.

20 Again, as my boss said just a minute
21 ago, there are -- Congress -- you know, you guys are
22 connected with Congress. We are, too. They will
23 listen. They will listen to your concerns and
24 they're going to do the right thing. Long story
25 short, going south or west is the wrong thing, the

1 wrong thing.

2 MS. ROSATO: There's a question here
3 and a question there. Just in order.

4 MR. SIMMONS, JR.: Well, I want to ask
5 a question. You mentioned that it looks like it
6 will never be considered a part of the building.
7 I'm hoping that you're not saying you're ruling out
8 the north side as part of the consideration.

9 And the second point is with the
10 expense issue, as Chris has pointed out and some
11 other people have mentioned, by the time you buy out
12 24 homeowners, a restaurant and everything else,
13 purchase the land, demolish the building or
14 refurbish the building versus take a building that
15 I'm sure the city would knock down for you on the
16 Greyhound site, give you the site free, you save
17 20-, \$25 million in doing that.

18 I'm asking why has the option not been
19 considered of building an entire courthouse complex
20 of 400,000 square feet? Because if you can do it at
21 the same price as the annex of \$80 million, I bet
22 you Senator Warner and Senator Allen and everybody
23 else would jump right on board and say thank you for
24 finding a solution here. But if that option is
25 never investigated -- and it doesn't sound like it

1 has been -- to build a completely new structure and
2 how much it would cost -- now, maybe I'm wrong, but
3 in the questions earlier, it was never investigated
4 and addressed, then there's no way you can rule that
5 option out feasibly.

6 MR. HEWELL: To confirm what you said,
7 now, as I said earlier, we have not studied the
8 construction of a 400,000-square-foot entirely new
9 building on the north site. We have not
10 considered -- we have not investigated at this point
11 beyond initial budget estimates the construction of
12 a 400,000-square-foot building anywhere, because the
13 priority -- the goal of the project was to retain
14 the Hoffman Courthouse.

15 And I will also repeat something I said
16 earlier. If we for some reason ended up deciding to
17 build an entirely new courthouse, we would look at
18 other sites besides these sites at that time, and at
19 that point it's a whole new project. At this point,
20 we are not authorized nor mandated to do that.

21 MR. PERREAULT: I just wanted to
22 respond to the response to the question about
23 Brambleton Avenue and what could be done.
24 Brambleton Avenue is not that wide. I defy you to
25 go to any major city in the United States that is

1 thought to be a very liberal and pedestrian-friendly
2 city. You can go to Paris, you can go to Rome, you
3 can go to Washington, D.C., New York City and
4 Boston. They have streets that are much wider than
5 Brambleton that manage to function as unified
6 streets.

7 And I understand that there has been a
8 leading architect that looked at this and he is of
9 the opinion that by building a structure in the
10 parking lot, compatible structure in the parking lot
11 of this building to the north, that could function
12 as an atrium or a building leading to the Brambleton
13 crosswalks to get to the building on the other
14 side. In other words, you wouldn't leave the north
15 end of the Hoffman Courthouse like it is, a parking
16 lot, if you would build an annex north of
17 Brambleton. You would build a building that was
18 specifically designed to fit with the courthouse and
19 lead and act as a unifier to the building on the
20 north side.

21 So this could be done, and you could
22 even include some functions in that addition on the
23 north side of the building that you want in this
24 side and want what you put on the other side.

25 MS. GILLIAM: Can we have your name

1 again?

2 MR. PERREAULT: Mark Perreault.

3 MS. GILLIAM: Mark Perreault.

4 MS. ROSATO: There's one more. And
5 this remark will close the session for today.

6 Can we have your name again?

7 MR. HUNTER: Yes, it's Blount Hunter.

8 Would you describe for us, please, in general the
9 role of the influence of the current generation of
10 judges on the selection of a site, not the need for
11 an expansion but for a site-specific selection
12 decision?

13 MR. HEWELL: The role of the judges in
14 Norfolk is the role of our client. We are -- the
15 selection of a site for the courthouse is a GSA
16 decision. We would certainly consider the opinions
17 of the judges here, and we consider the opinions of
18 our customer. I'm not sure exactly what your
19 question is, but --

20 MR. HUNTER: Well, it actually gets to
21 who's the customer here? You could have perhaps had
22 the same meeting with ten judges today if they're
23 your customers.

24 MR. HEWELL: Well, they will be the
25 tenant of whatever we build. That's what I mean

1 when I say the customers. Using current lingo
2 probably would be what's considered to be
3 stakeholders. Certainly, in the historic community,
4 the residents of the neighborhood, the people who
5 would be affected by the project are significant
6 stakeholders and are certainly also part of the
7 process. That's why the group met.

8 MS. ROSATO: Okay. I'd like to thank
9 you all for coming today. I'd like to mention again
10 that there are comment forms on your way out of the
11 courtroom here. And, also, please use the web site
12 for comments and questions.

13 I'd like to thank you for the respect
14 that you've shown us today in your questions and the
15 manner in which you asked them. It's very important
16 to us. And, again, we will be answering every
17 question that you pose to us either on the web site
18 or through the comments form. Thank you very much.

19 MR. MORRELL: Just a quick
20 clarification, it's not a web site. It's an e-mail
21 address.

22 MS. ROSATO: I'm sorry. It's an e-mail
23 address.

24 (The hearing was adjourned at 12:57
25 p.m.)